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THE BRIDE OF AN EVENING.

A ROMANCE OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "VIVIA GRANT'S FORTUNE," "HER DESPERATE WIFE," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PETITION.

When through fiery trial thy pathway shall lie,
My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply:
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.
Rowse Rose.

The petition for respite was drawn up by Mr Wright, read and approved by Mr. Dulanie, and signed by a large number of persons—even by those who, during the trial, had been most demonstrative, but who, since the prisoner was sentenced to death, were the most sympathizing, and also by conscientious persons, who would have refused to put their names to a petition, but readily signed one for respite.

Mr. Wright undertook the journey to the capital to present the petition to the Executive, in an affair of several days, which were passed in great anxiety by the unhappy prisoner and his suffering wife. At length, at the end of the week, the messenger returned.

The petition was refused!

The intelligence was communicated to the hapless pair, as they sat together, as usual, in the cell.

"God's will be done!" was the only comment made by Mr. Dulanie.

Honora averted her head; for one instant the same sound, as of the howling of angry waters, rang through her ears and brain; sudden darkness, as of a thunder-cloud, whirled her eyes and heart; her muscles failed, her breath ceased, her pulses stopped, so once before; then, by a mighty effort of the will, she saved herself from swooning, resumed her self-control, and turned a calm gaze of unbending faith upon her husband's countenance. She would not, as yet, trust her voice to speak; but when she did, her words and tones were courageous and inspiring.

But from this day, blow after blow fell upon the devoted heads of the unhappy pair. The next morning's mail brought a formal announcement of the rejection, by vote, of Governor Dulanie. Dulanie from his seat in the House of Representatives. The reception of this degrading intelligence must brought, for the first time since his arrest, a burning blush of unmerited shame to the brow of Mr. Dulanie. He would willingly have kept the intelligence from his wife, but that Honora learned it, as she also learned the day of execution, from the public press and the popular gossip. And after several prayer for strength and long closeting in the room more gained the supremacy over sorrow, terror and despair, and, with a calm and comforting countenance, entered her husband's cell, sat down beside him on the cot, laid her gentle hand upon his shoulder, raised her true eyes to his face, and said—

"Dearest Godfrey, I know all—all that you know—and can bear all that you bear! Let there be no more concealment, no more shall be no more partings between us! For mark you, Mr. Dulanie, so long as I live and you live, I will remain with you. Ah, my husband! through all—all! What you can endure, I can endure! And to the last moment of your life I will be by your side! My hand shall be the last to clasp your arm—my are the last to meet your gaze!"

"Honora! Father in Heaven, Honora! have you strength to do this?"

"God helping me, I have and I will do it—*and then die!*" she mentally added.

Calmly, and even cheerfully, Honora bore up during the day, and at night, so ere were that of the Executive, she retired to the cell, saw her throughout and held her in its serpent folds until the morning, when she returned to the preacing with a serene countenance in the presence of her husband, inspired by all of miraculous strength of endurance and self-control.

Godfrey Dulanie also exercised a marvelous power of self-government. Throughout the whole dark degradation of his present position and approaching fate—his life of high prosperity and honor, vering effort, and recently acquired honors, premeturely blighted; his position, from the favored to public execration; his well-won fame to unmerited infamy; his promises of glorious days cut short by shameful death; his sole legacy to his widowed bride a dishonored name and an incurable sorrow! Ah, Heaven, he felt it all! He suffered only as the strong in heart can suffer, and endured only as the great in soul can endure, without a complaint, without a groan, without a sigh that might wound the spirit of another.

His time was passed in preparation for death—in "setting his house in order," and giving himself for his journey through the "valley of the shadow." He made such provision for Honora built her majesty, as his large property would allow. He wrote letters or received visits from such friends as evil fortune had left him, and he passed many hours of the day and night in reading the Bible, in meditation and in prayer.

Through all these days his friends were not idle. Renewed application had been made in his behalf for the clemency of the Executive, but made, alas! in vain; no pardon, no respite, not a day's reprieve from death was granted to the unhappy man.

Honora, whose faith in her husband's perfect guiltlessness amounted to knowledge, and who confidently believed that if the opportunity were granted her, she should be able to impress the witnessed the betrayal of herself and Godfrey.

The window shutters of the two front rooms on either side of the entrance door were open, and the rainy glow of fire-light through artificial curtains, shone out in comfortable contrast to the snow-drifts and wintry wind without.

She went to the door and knocked, and was admitted by Zerubbabel, who stared at her with speechless surprise, and then looked frightened at having unwillingly shown her so much courtesy as to open the door.

"Is Governor Sierne staying here, Zerubbabel?" she asked, in the usual low, wailing key, with dying tones and dilated eyes.

Honora tore a leaf from her tablets, and wrote a few lines as follows:

"Mrs Godfrey Dulanie presents her respectful compliments to Governor Sierne, and begs the favor of an interview in the library, where she awaits his coming."

She placed it in the hand of the boy, saying—"Show me into the library, and then take this to Governor Sierne."

The boy stumbled the last, who, though frightened at what he had done and was about to do, was so accustomed to her commanding manner, that he instantly obeyed it.

Leading the way up stairs, he opened the door into a well-warmed and well-lighted library.—Every library is which, two months before, her husband had taken a fancy, and a particular convenience of death, had taken a parting glance of his wife with his circle of acquainting friends, just a moment before his unexpected arrest!

She seated herself in one of the easy chairs that sat on each side of the round table which stood before the glowing grate. Leaning her elbow upon the table, and her head upon her hand, she waited in intense anxiety the coming of the governor.

Mr. Hanora was greatly changed within the last two months! The firm contour of firm and feature, the gentle pride of eye and brow, the general bearing of air and carriage, were gone now! Her fine face was delicate even to fragility—her pure complexion pale and transparent as pearl in contrast to the rich, dark tresses plainly divided on her now noble brow; her large, dark gray eyes smoldering in deepest gloom beneath their long, black lashes, or suddenly flashed forth with the wild and frightened glare of a hunted hart. She wore, perhaps in lack of something plainer, a dress of rich black bombazine, with a mantilla and bonnet of black velvet, and a veil of black Chantilly lace, a delicate white lace collar and cuffs, and dainty white kid gloves, completed her elegant costume. A mournful beauty in her attitude and air—but an irresistible charm to her appearance.

Governor Sierne was far too gallant to keep a lady waiting. Perhaps the reader knows that chivalry was a prominent feature in the code of good-looking single gentlemen of an uncertain age. At all events, in according less than three minutes from the time Honora sent in her card, the door was opened, and Governor Sierne entered—tall, fine-looking, rather stout, very handsome, grave and dignified gentleman of about forty-five, with an erect form and a square, massive head, which is a profusion of iron gray hair and whiskers, and with a large, a glance and a smile of peculiar fascination, and a voice to execute that power.

"Good morning, madam," he said, with his softest voice, and with his most winning smile, and courteous bow, as he advanced towards the table on the left of which Honora was seated. The lady arose to receive him, but with a graceful wave of his hand and a gracious tone he prayed her to resume her seat, and promised to follow her example.

They sat down. Governor Sierne on the right, Honora on the left, the round table between them, the glowing fire before them.

"I trust that you have been well, madam, since I had the honor of meeting you last?" inquired the governor, in a bland voice, as he rested his left elbow upon the table, and turned with a smile of grave courtesy towards the lady visitor.

"As well, sir, as the calamitous circumstances will allow," replied the lady, truthfully, but with a choking voice, for it tried her soul to listen to these commonplaces of courtesy now so very much out of place.

There was a silence of a few minutes, during which Honora struggled with herself, and strove for words wherewith to open that communication for which the governor seemed courteously to wait. Perceiving at length, however, that such excitement her embarrassment grew deeper and more distressing, the governor graciously relieved her by saying, with a show of great deference—

"You did me the honor, madam, to command my attendance. I am here at your orders. Will you deign, therefore, to inform me in what manner I can be so happy as to serve you?"

"Ah! sir, you can be and is true to know!" exclaimed Honora, with passionate earnestness.

The governor turned his head, with an affable and expression of polite attention, and well accustomed perplexity—the governor seemed very much at a loss.

"Will you do me the honor, madam, to explain in what way I can be so fortunate as to please you?"

"*Please me!* Oh, sir! you can do infinitely more than please me! You can give me back my life and my husband's—make life of any worth!" exclaimed Honora, clasping her hands, and raising her eyes imploringly to his face.

"Upon my honor! I fear you overrate my power; but all that a man may do for a lady I freely promise. Command me, madam."

Without another word, Honora arose, and with a profound reverence laid her petition upon the table before him.

The governor raised it, recognized it as the petition that he had seen and rejected not an hour with a well-feigned look of sorrow, gently pushed it aside, saying, with grave courtesy—

"Your commands, as I feared, transcend my powers of compliance, madam."

"Oh! do not say so, sir. Well do I know that the divine power of life and death is vested for us in your hands alone. Would it divinely! were as life! till the miserable woman before you from her deepest depths of a sorrow you never dreamed of, to the bright'st of joy you can never imagine!"

"*Good Heaven,* Will! would bring together until their delicate blue veins were started up and knotted like dark cords, and with wild, dilated eyes fixed in a terrible expression upon his face.

"You love this bridegroom of yours very much, madam," said the governor, with a strange and ominous change in his voice.

"*Love him?*" repeated Honora, in a tone deep, low, and shivering with intense emotion—"*Love him?* Oh, sir! it is a love seems crude your question might call a blush to every cheek; but not now—not when life or death may hang upon the answer to mine! Yes, *I love him!*—so much that if he should suffer the death to which he is condemned, I, also, who have not been tried or convicted, must share his unmerited fate—for I could not survive him!"

"What, madam, would you be a suicide?" exclaimed the governor, in a voice of horror.

"Oh, no; nor would it be necessary. I should not destroy myself, but *die!*"

"Madam—all this while you are standing. I pray you resume your seat."

"No, no, sir! This attitude, or one still more humble, is the proper posture for a supplicant in the presence of the power who holds her life in his hands!"

"Why harp you on this subject, lady? I hold no power over your precious life."

"Over my husband's, then; and through his over mine."

"You mistake, madam. My prerogative is not so unlimited as you imagine," he said, taking up the petition, glancing over it, and then laying it down, he continued, "The pardoning prerogative, so vested in the Executive, is certainly a discretionary power; but it is, also, a holy trust, and should be exercised only on rare occasions, well understood, and in certain conditions under no one of which Mr. Dulanie's case comes. He has had a fair trial; he has been convicted under the most crushing weight of both circumstantial evidence and direct testimony, which has left not the shadow of a doubt as to his guilt to the minds of any, except perhaps his too confiding bride, and which has left no possible loop-hole for his escape from death. Pardon me, madam, that I have spoken thus plainly upon a most painful subject. I did so only to justify myself before you!"

While he spoke Honora stood with her form half bent towards him, her white hands wrung painfully together, her bloodless lips compressed, and her wild, impassioned eyes strained forth in an agony of entreaty.

"Oh, sir," she began, "there is no need to justify yourself to me! And neither did I petition for a pardon, since no crime has been committed. But for a respite from death I implore you on my knees!" she continued, sinking as she fast, and bowing her head almost to the dust before him.

"Madam, arise! The respite for which you pray comes under the same category as the pardon for which you seem to petition. I could no consistently grant the one as the other. And if I were willing to do so, I have duty of what little much respite would be. It would, indeed, only serve to prolong the agony, but could not avert one. Dear lady, arise! It wounds me cruelly to see you thus," he said, taking her hand, and gently raising to life her form.

"No, no! No, no! Here on my knees—until you grant my prayer!" she cried. "What can would the respite be, you ask? Every one! Sir, he is guiltless! he is guiltless! God knows that he is; and in the additional length of days that you might accord him, God might discover the truth, and bring to light his stainless integrity. Oh, sir! grant me—for you are great us—that one remaining chance of life! Think what a life for a life it is to be never committed! To be cut off in the bloom of youth, and glow of love, and prime of fame!—To be forced violently from this dear life, and warm sunshine, and bright world, full of sweet affection, and aspiring hopes, and to be crowded down into the darkness grave! To suffer a public and shameful death, and leave behind a dishonored name! Think what this must be to him—to him so gifted, so ambitious, so full of glorious promise! to him who had just reached the acme of all his hopes, and hopes, and aspirations, to suddenly struck down—down—down to this deep Gehenna of dishonor! Oh, sir, be sure rather that I Governor Sierne, hear me! pity me! save me! and I will bless your mercy, and pray for your happiness forever!" she cried, convulsively clasping both his hands in both of hers, and straining her wild and tearful gaze up to his face, in the agony of her supplication.

Governor Sierne, he replied, in a solemn tone, "there was a time not long ago, when, at your fact, I poured forth my soul in prayer for that mercy which you now implore at my feet, madam! Only, Honora, it was not for the boon of life I prayed, but for that blessed boon which was made life passing sweet to me!"

"Sir!" she answered, the current of her blood turned back on hearing them words. All that she had ever heard of the fierce, cruel, and relentless spirit that lurked behind his fascinating smile, and consistently courtesy, rushed upon her memory, congealing her very heart's blood, and her eye in astonishment to his face.

There was nothing nothing in that countenance to terrify or discourage her. It was as I have before described it, calm, grave, and even more than more benignant in promise than any of his words had been. Honora cast her fate upon the counter-sign, and answered, in a voice of entreaty—

"Remember those things no longer, sir; or, remembering, let them only in memory of my love have regarded poor Honora Paule, he magnanimous Governor Sierne!"

"I will endeavor to be just, at least. Honora, a respite would do Mr. Dulanie no good; it would only lengthen out the days of unavailing sorrow for the fatal hope deferred that maketh the heart sick. Rise, I pray you, madam," he said, raising the supplicant, who remained with her hands clasped, and her eyes fixed upon him with the same expression of wild entreaty.

"Honora," he said, "there is one condition upon which I will grant Godfrey Dulanie his life, and that is that you be shall go forth from the prison a free and unblasted man!"

The blood rushed in torrents to her brow, and, receding, left her cheek pale as death. Her eyes were more wildly dilated; she looked and felt like one suddenly stricken with madness.

"What is it you say?" she began, in a voice sunken with intense anxiety and perplexity.—"Oh! do I hear aright? You—you will save him?"

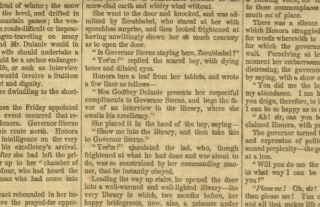
"He LIVE AND SOON will I save upon a certain condition!"

Honora sprang to her feet, as an overwhelming tide of joy rushed over her.

"His life and honor! His life! I may—you could save! but—his life and *honor!*" Oh, God! my God! I thank Thee! for this joy is more than I could have hoped for, or would have dared to pray for! I am not insane or dreaming, am I, sir?" she added, turning a distressed, appealing gaze upon the governor.

"No, madam. You have heard aright. I will save Mr. Dulanie's life and honor—upon certain conditions with which only you can comply."

"Command me, then. What would I not do or suffer to save my husband! My whole fortune—my life, if necessary, would I give to purchase his



HONORA PETITIONING GOVERNOR SIERNE FOR A RESPITE FOR HER HUSBAND.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER.

salvation!" exclaimed Honora, with eager earnestness.

"Something of much less value to you, but of much more worth to me than life or fortune, is the condition to which I allude. Be seated, dear lady, while I speak of the terms upon which I will do as I have promised," said the governor as, with grave courtesy, he handed his companion to a chair, and drew his own to her side.

"And now—the conditions," said Honora.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE TEMPTATION.

The soul that to Jesus hath cried for repose,
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I will never, no never, no never forsake.
—Samuel Stone.

Governor Sirrae arose, and with his graceful, gliding step passed to the door, opened it, looked out, and apparently satisfied that the court was clear, reclosed it and resumed his seat opposite Honora.

He drew his chair forward, so that when he rested his elbow on the table and leaned his head upon his hand, his face was somewhat too familiarly close to that of the lady.

"This is understood to be a confidential interview, madam?"

"Since you desire—yes, sir," replied Honora, with dignity, "only believe me in the first manner you can save my husband."

"Nay, madam, that is my *next*, only to be impatient upon conditions. I have also to ask of you a promise that all which passes between us in this interview shall, in any event, be kept private."

Honora paused a moment to reflect, and then answered directly but still with dignity:

"Your Excellency has my promise."

"Honora," he said, "all that a man hath will he give for his life?" How much would a woman give for the life of her lover—of the man whom she loved?—How much would you give?"

"All that might be required of me!" exclaimed the lady impetuously.

"All!" questioned the governor with emphasis.

"All," repeated the lady, who was of too pure a heart to suspect wrong. "All that I have! my life, were that possible!"

He looked at her with deep and wicked meaning in his evil eyes. He drew his chair closer and dropped his voice to a whisper in addressing her.

How dared he utter the words that fell from his lips? They formed an infamous proposal, that I may not stain these pages by transcribing.

Honora sprang to her feet as if the deadly catastrophe had raised its crested head before her.

The indignant blood in torrents crimsoning her face, neck, and bosom, the flashing from her eyes, anger controlling her frame. She stood proudly, but stood for an instant pressing both hands hard upon her heart to keep down the rising passion. Then growing very pale, she suddenly turned and walked towards the door.

Governor Sirrae started up to delay her—

"Madam! Honora! do not leave me thus! hear me explain!"

But as if scorning to hold an instant of further intercourse with one so base, she made no reply.

"Honora! madam! you must really hear me!" persisted the governor, following her and seizing her hand.

But scorning to struggle, to reply, or even to listen, she just set forth her command, in a firm, bell-clear and rang a peal that presently brought Candahasi into the room.

"Attend me to the door!" commanded Honora to this functionary, who immediately obeyed her.

With the air of an outraged queen the lady passed through the room, leaving the governor standing there, the picture of disappointment.

She left the house, without meeting any one among her relations, who perhaps purposely kept out of her way. She re-entered her chair, and, attended by her faithful little escort, took her way across the square, through the wooden and over the plains to the "county seat."

He was seated when she reached Wilde.

Leaving her male in charge of Willie Wardour, she entered the prison and proceeded at once to the cell of her husband.

He was seated at the little stand deeply engaged in the perusal of the scriptures. When she appeared, he looked up, arose and held out his arms.

She approached and sank into them. He asked no question; she volunteered no information. It was a silent embrace. They only pressed her, and they both sat down upon the side of the cot, holding each other's hands. At last—

"It is all over?" he said.

"I know it, dearest Honora! dearest wife, I know it! I know it before you have spoken one word to satisfy you."

"Well? I am satisfied. Otherwise, had I not made this effort, I should have been discontented. Now I know that every human means of saving you has been exhausted, and I am resigned. Resigned! I do not know that that is the word: perhaps it *should* be *grateful*! For, a little sooner than we expected, we change this scene! If immortal flame rests upon our early grave on this earth, what can we? Our life is but another refuge! It cannot last long! I am now going to our humble grave and my! There lay the consecrated ash to which I may be united only to satisfy you."

"Well? I am satisfied. Otherwise, had I not made this effort, I should have been discontented. Now I know that every human means of saving you has been exhausted, and I am resigned. Resigned! I do not know that that is the word: perhaps it *should* be *grateful*! For, a little sooner than we expected, we change this scene! If immortal flame rests upon our early grave on this earth, what can we? Our life is but another refuge! It cannot last long! I am now going to our humble grave and my! There lay the consecrated ash to which I may be united only to satisfy you."

"Dearest Honora! my own dearest Honora! why do you continue to say 'we,' 'our'? 'us' in speaking of my doomed life, as if you were to be united to mine so that you must suffer all that I suffer? Sweet wife, it is not so! One sacrifice will content relentless destiny. It shall be so! At last, a long life of duty and happiness will remain for you. Think of me only as the cloud that obscured your dawn of life but passed away long ere noon; leaving all the sunny day bright to its new flight," he said, looking down upon her face with a smile full of benignant love.

She arose and threw herself into his arms, cast here about his shoulders and strained him to her faithful bosom, and amid the most fervent caresses murmured—

"A long life will remain to both / to me! / but will be a life *beyond the grave!* Oh! I can thine eyes I swear you! Nothing—not death itself—can sever us! God will not leave me to suffer longer than I! He is too good! he will not curse me so! There is no reason why he will curse me so! I have breathe thee, no close to us earth—none! No one will be bereaved by my departure—no, not one! Therefore there is no reason why I should not see or comprey there on thy journey to the other world, and I feel that the Lord will let me go. We shall begin our married life in that other world, dearest! and I am content! I am happy since we go together!"

Extreme must. Sorrow sometimes saddens to rapture. But it is only the utmost stretch of grief that is reaches ecstasy. And that is true with Honora now. But it is an overstrain of nature that cannot last long: either the mind flies off in phrensy and confirmed insane, or there is a sudden collapse and full into languor and idiocy, or else, death steps in and closes the scene.

It could not last long with Honora. It was obvious to the most superficial observer, that without the intervention of no especial Providence, it would be as she had said, she would die with her husband!

He laid her head upon his breast and caressed her unwind. He asked her no questions relative to her interview with the governor; he knew that it was fruitless and he felt that it must also have been painful, and refrained from troubling her to recur to the hateful theme. Little did he suspect the deep dishonor of the terms of pardon that had been offered her.

And Honora forbore to distress him with any hint of that infamous proposal. Nothing more was said on the topic of the interview, but the subject reverted to between them again.

The next day, Sunday, the village paper, the "Weekly Herald," contained the following paragraph:

THE APPROACHING EXECUTION.—We understand that yesterday afternoon a final appeal for pardon was made by the wife of Godfrey Dalziele, to Governor Sirrae, at Hoboken, where the governor resides, but that the prayer of the petition having been rejected, the executive promises will not be further considered by him or his officers.

Honora only saw the caption of that paragraph and, shuddering, turned her eyes away. But Dalziele read it through, and with a melancholy smile laid the paper aside. The reminder of the week was passed by the hapless pair in preparation for the great change that awaited them.

A calmness that looked like resignation, but that was only despair, had settled upon Honora. "Pale and still and silently" she waited as the hours drew her lodgings to the prison, and at evening from the prison to her lodgings. Scarcely an atom of food had she put into her mouth since her husband's sleep visited her eyes at night. Only in the presence of her husband did she appear to rouse from her devoted.

Godfrey Dalziele passed his few remaining hours of life in reading the scriptures, in prayer and in converse with his beloved wife. His fortitude did not fail him. Whatever pain he felt, he never looked at Honora, how much she suffered, and how much for his sake she suppressed. Only once was almost tempted to wish that it might be given to him to die in night by torment in the cell, and then rather than suffered to live a long life of incurable sorrow. He prayed with her and for her. And then in order to lift her thoughts from the bereft flight, greeted with an unmistakable confidence. He spoke with much cheerfulness, and made a congenial canopy of crimson and gold, he is clearly surrounded by the light of the sun. And alone, but most vividly among them, shines the smiles of the Saviour, and presents to him a copy of the Living Book to be with your friend, and it with deep reverence, and then steps forward. Bows, and prepares to receive the soul. He is greeted with shouts of applause by the vast assembly that fills to suffocation the galleries, aisles, lobbies, and auto-rooms leading to it; by the multitudes that throng the streets of the city without, and by cries of applause rend the very sky! In the interval of her delight and triumph for him, she awakes—

Oh, God! Oh, God! The narrow walls of the prison cell around her! There, on the near pole, lies the worshiped of her heart, the hero of her glorious dream, prostrate, motionless, dead! And soon, oh, Heaven of Heavens, to die!

Honora—she had been in her dream were the voices of a mula crowd in the street below the prison, who were cursing, swearing, and otherwise blaspheming the Most High—Honora started upward to secure good standing-places on Gallows Hill, and thus the dream and the execution was to take place. Honora was and heard them as she turned from the window, and opened the door of the cell, close beside her pillow, and that overlooked the street below; and, totally bereft of courage by her dream, she sank down upon the floor, and covered her face with her hands.

"My Honora! my beloved one! take courage!" said the voice of Godfrey Dalziele. "Is it possible her to a sense of duty? With one of those mighty efforts in which years of vitality are in a moment concentrated, she arose, composed herself, and seated herself.

Grief, care and vigilance had so blanched and sharpened the face of Honora, that her large gray eyes and her broad expanse of brow crowned with its "sorrowful of dark hair" were the only beauty left developed. The rest, too, though scarcely dying of emaciation, had become sharpened and pinched.

But it was now, as I said, six o'clock, the usual hour of rising. Good Mr. Wardour opened the cell-door, and upon the response of Mr. Dalziele bidding him come in, he unlocked the door and entered.

"You are about to shut up for the night?" inquired the governor.

"Yes," replied the warden, in a broken voice, for he sympathized deeply and painfully with the hapless pair.

"Honora, dearest Honora, bid me good night and leave me to—to—to—

TO MY SISTER.

BY "ALLIE M. RUTAN.

Ella, there's a land hazy
Dreaming in sky soft, earth cyne,
Like a tender sea-bird's breathing
In the midnight's mystic shine;
And thy features are its fashion,
As I carved by Grecian art;
And tears have broken the passion—
But I love thee for thy heart.

There are thoughts of deepest brightness
Hiding in thy spirit's calm,
As young trembling leaves of summer
Hide among the lily buds.
May no sudden sunbeam drive them
Rudely from their fairy nests;
May no storm-wind scatter wrapped,
With wan wings and blessing breasts.

Last night in the dreary darkness,
When the heaviest winds went by,
Sweetly thou breathed in my bosom,
Till I thought that I must die;
And I felt that it was fearful
To be with such silent, strong,
Such a mighty power as the silence,
To the eternal and unknown.

Yet the darkness and the mystery
Of the limbs beyond the grave,
And the deep and threatening echoes
Of each dark and chilling wave,
Cannot make me fear to meet and weep for
Down in Death's concealed and sacred
Cold our fright-bit heart, my sister,
From the anguish of the dead.

We have heard the fiery agonies
Of the twilight's dreamy time,
From the same sweet lyr together
Pulling like a single chime;
And we've left our home and wandered
Through a wash of lime-dew,
Yet met wind and blight and blackness,
I have ever found thee true.

It were more than death to leave thee,
Idol of an angel heart;
And I often ask the angels,
May we never, never part.
Yet the years come bent bring us changes,
And wherever they unravel go,
Ella, may thy fate be brighter
Than thy sister hopes to know.

FRIGHTENING A PIRATE.

A SEA SKETCH.

BY ELYANOS COBB, JR.

Captain Ira Barnard used to sail from Portland in a brig called the "Ellen Maria." He had her built for his own use, and she was a neat, pretty craft, after the Baltimore fashion, with heavy foretopsail and top-gallant-sail, and a goodly bit of canvas for a topsail upon the main. She was painted up to suit his own taste; and, take her all in all, she was one of the handsomest vessels that sailed. The crew consisted of the captain's eldest son—Ira, Jr.—who was one-and-twenty, and acted as mate, and two others—all told, nine men fit for hard duty.

Early in the spring, the Ellen Maria sailed for Havana with a load of shooks and hoop-poles. She had some other articles on board, but these composed the bulk of her cargo.

So, said the skipper, addressing his son, "we must keep a sharp look-out, for I expect to meet old Sanders along here somewhere."

"I thought of that," replied Ira.

"He'll have papers for us," added the old man, as his forward towards the wheel.

"Old" Sanders, who was not a bit older than Ira Barnard, senior, commanded the brig Seguin, and was to have left Havana at about the same time on which the Ellen Maria left Portland, and that Barnard hoped to fall in with him. Nor was he disappointed; for early one morning, when off the coast of Carolina, a sail was discerned to the southward, and in an hour afterwards it was made out to be Sanders. When the two brigs were near enough, they both hove-to, and Capt. Barnard and his son ferried over their boat, and went on board the other vessel. Papers were exchanged; Barnard told all the news from home, and Sanders told of all he had seen in Cuba.

"But!" said the latter, with a serious look, "there's one thing I haven't told you. There's a pirate cruising about between here and Havana. She's a Brazilian craft, and manned by Spaniards and negroes. She's a dangerous customer to fall in with."

"A pirate!" cried Ira, in alarm. "Do they kill everybody they take?"

"They have butchered the crews of some small vessels."

"But have you seen this critter?" asked Capt. Barnard.

"No, thank God, I haven't," was the response. "But when I first met you, I began to tremble. Your brig has about as saucy a look as any craft that floats. Those painted ports and your main masts kind o' put an impudent air on ye."

"I say!" shouted Ira, in a bewildered, yet enthusiastically. "I named her after my wife, and she's a beauty, too. But," he added, more seriously, "how did you learn about this infernal pirate?"

"We heard of her first in Havana. She chased a French schooner almost into the very guns of the Moro. And then I met an English brig yesterday that had picked up four men who had been compelled to 'walk the plank' by the same villains. Three men were part of the crew of a Spanish trader. The pirate captured their vessel, and, after filling six of their men, made them tear walk overboard."

"Thunder!" exclaimed Ira.

"I say thunder!" echoed his father. "It'll be thunder if we fall in with that chap. But I guess I can run up from here."

"Perhaps so," returned Sanders. "Your brig is a fast one, but the pirate is fast, too. However, you may not meet her."

"But what does he look like?"

"A small schooner, long and heavy, with new sails, and masts raking more than yours do."

"We'll better not say anything to the men about this," remarked Barnard, as he and his son pulled back to their vessel.

Ira thought the same; so they kept the matter of the pirate a secret while they could.

During the day the wind was from the westward, through not very fresh, the brig making not more than an average of six knots. But as the sun was sinking below the horizon, one of the men reported a sail to the eastward. Capt. Barnard got his glass, and, long he looked, he could not make out that the strange craft was a topsail schooner, with new canvas, and very raking masts.

"It's the pirate, sure as fate!" he whispered to his son.

"Do you think so?" returned Ira, trembling.

"I'm confident of it."

"The Lord help us!"

"But it's close on to night," said the old man, "and we may run away from her."

"Run away from what?" asked Jack Phipps, who had overheard the last remark.

"From that schooner," the skipper replied. "I don't like the looks of her."

Phipps was very inquisitive, for he had noticed the old man and Ira whispering together, and he mistrusted something, and finally he succeeded in getting the whole story.

Just as the sun disappeared below its bed of water, Barnard got a fair view of the schooner, and he had no doubt left upon his mind. She answered exactly to the description Sanders had given him of the pirate, and she had changed her course, too. When first seen, she had been close-hauled upon the larboard tack, standing to the north'ard; and went'ard, but now she had gone about, and was standing up towards the brig.

The men were alarmed; but as night closed in, and the schooner was shut out from view, they hoped to get away. Some of them proposed to down with the helm and run for the coast. But the skipper said, no. He would stand on his course, and run the risk. The pirate would be as likely to run for the coast as any way.

"By Jimminy," uttered Phipps, "if we had men enough, Bill and I could get our drum and fife a going, and frighten 'em."

"Yes—and if we had men enough, we could fight 'em," returned the captain.

This seemed reasonable, so all hands smiled in wishing that they had plenty of men, and plenty of arms and ammunition.

A strict watch was kept, and at midnight Bill Sawyer discovered a sail upon the port quarter. He was in the main-top, and could just make out a dark mass against the starlit water. Capt. Barnard went aloft with his night-glass—a powerful one, by the way—and he could see the schooner's masts clearly defined.

"She's overhauling us," he said, as he stepped upon the deck; "and I guess we'll have to fight."

"We are willing as fast as we can. We have no more cannon to spare."

The crew were terror-stricken. There was no stock-fish for breakfast, and no grub in the locker. They might do their utmost, and yet the sails could move them only so fast. At two o'clock the schooner was discovered to be broad upon the brig's beam

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

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ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1858.

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FAME.

What an endless struggle, since the foundation of the world, men have indulged in for fame. Some for a pure and noble fame—for a name honorable and sweet in the memory of generations to come, when renown, infinitely whether pure or tarnished—renown writes upon columns, temples and tombs, trophies raised by the blood, the sweat of slaves; and some for notoriety—the Herostrates and Sam Patches of our race. Sometimes a thing like name or greatness, "King of Kings?" Alexander, demi-deified at Ammon; Cæsar, remembered by his purple and Bonaparte, lifted into remembrance by the skirts of Johnson. Infinite the variety! The desire for fame—to survive forgetfulness—to outlive oblivion, has cost mankind seas of blood and ages of agony and sorrow. Fleets and cruel armies have been born of it; fiery declarations have raged on its track; love, truth and justice have perished, and nations have have hurl their necks to exalt its possessors. History is little more than the foul story of ambitious strife for fame—for higher place in the admiration of lovers.

Yet how few of the strugglers are remembered; and of those most have their measure of infamy. By no means is memory strong or generous to all alike. Time is an avenger, closely sifting the remembered—setting the notorious and the infamous with equal honors on the shelf of fame. Better Nero had he been forgotten; better for Alva had he been unknown; better for Arnold he never been born. But it is glorious to win the fame of a Howard or a Washington—to be not only remembered, but also reverenced and beloved—to leave a name fragrant in the world's heart. This is true nobleness, worthy of all struggle and of the highest ambition. These are the great, the imperishable names, outliving pillar, and temple, and tomb. Next to these are the good names—names of the pure and just of earth, which, though forgotten in history, and engraven upon brass or marble, are written on the everlasting record of virtue—in the book of God. Better to walk in a plain path through these, than to be notorious on the page of history, or remembered infamously with Nero. Better be humbly good than ignobly great; better far be a Howard than a Cæsar. "A good name is better than wine," is rather to be chosen than great riches."

LIKELY TO BE FULFILLED.

The prediction of the French *savant*, that the earth with the present season would enter on a new cycle of mild winters, seems likely to be fulfilled so far as the starting point is concerned. So mild a December has not been witnessed within our recollection, and January opened in the same spirit. However it may be as to the future, we have continuous snow-blanket refreshes and recuperates the earth, and improves it to the farmer's hand, so conclusive that the absence of such blanket is looked on as inevitable blowing to ill-housed and ill-fed thousands in our midst. The cold weather has been to such food, fuel and raiment, for which let us be thankful to the All-provident Hand of the "Master of Life." Ice is a great luxury during the "heated term," but if the worst fears of the ice-cracker should be realized, there will be found enough and enough way in the poor, who consume but little of that article, to make him wholesomely discomfort of the rich, who can command it from the "frigid Baltic." A friend writes us from the interior of the earth round about him was plough-able on New-year's day, and that he plucked violets out of doors on the 15th of December.

IN ORIGINAL COMMENT!

Some of our medical men have raised the alarm of "Cholera next Summer." They say the cholera has always come, on the average, once in three successive years. Also, that its breaking out in Russia is a premonitory symptom of its coming the Atlantic next summer. We do not put any faith in these croakings, and only refer to them for the purpose of saying that all who are temperate and tidy need have no fears of cholera or other epidemics.

Ed.—A great deal of the poetry of life is in paying small debts.—*Bulwer's Pelham.*

Ditto a bore; but aside from the poetry of the thing, we wish every one would pay his honest debts. A vast amount of trouble would be avoided by paying as you go. Besides, if you wish to live a decent, comfortable life, always pay your debts—and promptly. The old saying, that to be "damned" half a dozen times for every little penny bill, by no doing, some of you will save on a deal of trouble.

Bear it in Mind.—We invariably stop the Ledger at the expiration of the time for which subscribers have paid. This is our rule, and we think it is more satisfactory to subscribers, as by this method they will in no case run in arrears, and will never be subject to the payment of back dues in the shape of subscriptions. Therefore, old subscribers will see the necessity of renewing as soon as the time for which they have paid expires.

ON THE THRESHOLD.

Progressed as our age is in knowledge—in popular intelligence, and the arts and sciences—there are not a few, but many, who believe that the human mind and the human race are still on the threshold of intellectual achievement. It would seem, with the application of steam and lightning, that but small triumph over the material world remained. More than the Syracusan dreamed, we have accomplished, and yet there are continually budding forth enterprises, or thoughts of enterprise, that seem for the moment almost miracle-like themselves. But the wonder about them soon subsides in this age of wonders, and they become, in a fairly passed, more wonderful things are born.

The idea of under-wiring the oceans, now, is less speculative than the first proposition to transmit thought by lightning was deemed. The "Great Eastern" steamer, speculative as such an enterprise is accounted as extraordinary as was the first craft ingenuity across the Atlantic, "in defiance of wind and tide." Even when a "stupendous" undertaking, like an ocean telegraph, fails for a moment, the world does not lose heart. The people of Christendom have come to believe that "almost anything is possible," and that difficulties are made to be imprisoned and dirided in our day. In truth, too much is expected of the age in some times, and the wh cannot very nearly perform a miracle with machinery, need not think to become a "mere show." To abridge the labor of man, or a hundred fold, is the convenient expectation of the public of him who rips wheels to go by steam, to harvest the fields, or fabricate the raw material thereof.

It is the vision of a multitude, of not "disciplined minds," that nature hath solitude forces in her bosom that she keeps close to her heart, and their discovery will come when we have outgrown our present lightning. In this age of the world, may will be prophesied, in view of the mental activities in pursuit of larger truth and light, for the future. The future is pregnant with what new days the world conquering material for Greek or Roman empire, may have finally developed to their greatest of conquerors. They were not, for its one day by science, and nature herself will not overcome to uphold the empire of humanity, and something of the large spoil of this mighty, peaceful, universal conquest will be given to the sable of improvement man, as well as to the palaces of kings. The progress of our age is not in the direction of any particular race or state—it diverges from the centre, where Confederation stands crowned with splendors, and broadens out to the very bleak ocean boundaries—far beyond the "pillars of Hercules" and the colonies already in the Pacific. Better New York be born together; better for Alva had he been unknown; better for Arnold he never been born. But it is glorious to win the fame of a Howard or a Washington—to be not only remembered, but also reverenced and beloved—to leave a name fragrant in the world's heart. This is true nobleness, worthy of all struggle and of the highest ambition. These are the great, the imperishable names, outliving pillar, and temple, and tomb. Next to these are the good names—names of the pure and just of earth, which, though forgotten in history, and engraven upon brass or marble, are written on the everlasting record of virtue—in the book of God. Better to walk in a plain path through these, than to be notorious on the page of history, or remembered infamously with Nero. Better be humbly good than ignobly great; better far be a Howard than a Cæsar. "A good name is better than wine," is rather to be chosen than great riches."

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FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

WHAT I HATE.

Chiefest of all salutary abominations, is the cadaverly woman. I blame no man who rushes from a home whose interiors, habitually and from principle, exhibit not a cat-paper or three blot hair, dingy, cobwebs morning gown, and slipshod feet. If there is any time when a pretty is this age of wrinkles and fine lines, it is at twenty-four, it is in a neat breakfast-toilette with her shining braids in order, and her white petticoat peeping from a breakfast-robe, (unlike, if you like, provided it is well cut, and the color be well chosen,) and if there is a time when a plain woman comes the nearest to being handsome, it is in this same lovable, feminine dress.

I will maintain that the coffee and eggs taste better, and that the husband grows more sufficient and hopefully to his day's task, after helping such a wife to bread and butter. I could never comprehend why women are divided between coquettes are few of them—or understand how a woman, fresh, can reach a crowded city at the hour when she should not be scrupulously neat in all the different strata of her apparel; and certainly in these days, when no omnibus can drive up to a forty-hour, without encountering an expectant body-guard of ladies, the public who ride must be lazy or heavily inclined, who shall say that a trim gaiter-boot and a well-fitting dress skirt can be habitually worn unappreciated?

I repeat, I blame no man from rushing in disgust from a home where mistress is a slattern; who never pays her husband the compliment to look her shining best at his return. Such women

NATURE AND ART ON THE HUDSON.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Stream of the North! beside thy noble tides
Dawns on the soul full many a mighty theme—
Thine then the adoring song, while lengthly silence
You moss-brough silvery clouds that seem calm dream
Through soothing slumbers, with melodious beam;
And far away, wrapp'd in a dewy veil,
The lustrous sunshine, and the azure stream
Both softly on beneath the drowsy West,
Like a love vow that wrinds o'er sleeping Beauty's breast.

Come then when morning comes with many a smile,
Gemm'd with her dew, and rinsing tears deep
In the fair cause: kindles every ill
And greenwood on the bank; from steep to steep,
Thine the sweet song, while the echo answers long—
The river ship, the barge, the light canoe,
The dashing steamer with its ancient buoy,
The skiff gliding in the sunny haze,
Hills, mountains, palisades all looking on the view!

Man not ungrateful, marked the scene, and Art
With Nature's sparkles in a stronger radiance
Have made scenery of the trodden soil,
Have made home more human; and many a lofty place
In white with walls that give surrounds grace;
Hid ethic Abbey, classic Pantiling palace,
Filled with the breath of old: awe-struck I trace
This golden fancy built by modern hands,
You looking like a gem that came from ancient lands:

And Nature's fairy pools down the gorge of years,
That circle in pendent in a pleasure;
And fire-wrestled Sands drops its own tears
O'er Portrait in the burning sun,
And sweet Beauties crowns all light and bloom,)
That with the Poet's rainbow of the time;
And belted heights with glittering spear and plume;
And sunniest clouding of the crystal rhyme
Of Cover-de-lace in India's holy clime!

RICHARD HOFFMAN;

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER XI.

We once heard a very respectable widow lady, who had been thrice married, declare, as had in sad widowhoods to her sister, who was on the eve of bestowing her hand upon an exceedingly worthy fellow of our acquaintance, that after an established recognized grievance, or a handsome income settled on herself, the next best advantage a wife could obtain was a cue to her husband's character—a key to unlock the innermost recesses of his heart, and deliver his secretly-cherished weaknesses and failings, bored head and foot like so many helpless captives, to her discretion.

"Not that I am my right-minded woman," she judiciously added, by reverting that we had had acide our book and were listening to her lecture, "would ever think of abusing her knowledge of a fellow; certainly not, my love; still it is advisable to obtain it, on the same principle that a sea captain or general takes up a strong position in front of an ally whose intentions he is doubtful of."

That same day we came to a conclusion—mentally of course—never to place our affections upon any girl, be she ever so fair, who had not a widowed aunt in her family, and have affected to it ever since.

We know not whether Lady Boothroyd had been blessed with one of these confidential advisers, or if the intuitive perceptions of her sex led her, by a course of natural logic, to the same conclusions; but certain it is she practised the same precepts as successfully as if it had been inculcated in her girlhood's years. Her master's weakness—naturally four for his personal safety—was cleverly acted on. Pitches deferred were laid hold and fixed at a mo concealed in the branches of the great elm directly opposite his master's chamber window; but before he could be seen again the villain escaped.

Cowardice is proverbially credulous. How could Sir Norman do otherwise than believe him? Had he not heard the report of the gun himself?

Her ladyship's maid next gave notice to quit. The reason she slept in fronted the park, and her nerves were delicate.

"The weather?" exclaimed the chicken-hearted baronet, "I tell the gipsy they may have the credit of having a resident landlord amongst them."

The inhabitants of St. Faith's parish were much of the same opinion.

This was exactly what the artful woman required. It conferred her husband in the resolution of quitting Meldown, while the raillery of Squire Blundell had somewhat shaken him. Not long detested the country; it presented too narrow a field for talents such as the London was their natural sphere; there they might find scope.

Orders were given to prepare for their journey.

A day or two before quitting the hall her ladyship announced her intention of taking a walk through the village for those heard it with astonishment.

"What!" he exclaimed; "trust yourself in that den of poachers, cassinos, and monsters?"

"I have no fear," replied the lady. "They entertain no feeling of animosity against me; it is your blood they thirst for."

"Mercenary!" ejaculated the baronet, with a shudder.

"Indeed!" added the lady, "we must not let them triumph in the idea of having driven or frightened us out of the place!"

"Certainly not!" exclaimed the gentleman, emphatically. "I detest!" he repeated, "I can never hoard of a Boothroyd being driven! and as for fear, I trust that no ridiculously erroneous impression will be entertained regarding my motives in leaving Meldown."

His wife smiled.

"It is to spare the misguided wretches the perpetration of a horrible, unheard-of crime," continued the speaker, "that I consent to it. To know how little personal consideration has anything to do with it," he added, "I would willingly accompany you, but Dr. Phrase has insisted on my keeping my room."

"I require no escort," answered her ladyship, who had her own motives for going alone; "and repeat that I have nothing to dread: my lawyers are for you."

As the speaker quitted the apartment, Sir Norman mentally asked himself whether it was the unsettled condition of his affairs generally which caused this unusual anxiety. And if not that, what other motive could possibly have led to it; for even his vanity was not sufficiently egregious to attribute it to love—a dream they had both long since awakened from.

Lady Boothroyd's first visit was to the cottage of the weaver. She wished to judge with her own eyes whether the hints of the old steward arose from sagacious, the whisperings of a startled conscience, or were founded on any positive resemblance between the orphan Lillian, and the unfortunate Allan.* Not that the result in either case would affect her plans; which were founded on certain principles, or rather the absence of all principle—her evil passions and the ambition even she entertained for the future establishment of the fair and innocent Allen.

Old Simon and Hester were much surprised on seeing Lady Boothroyd in their humble cottage. They refused her offers to take charge of Lillian, and would not even accept of a few pressure for the child.

The likeness of Lillian to the portrait of Allan was most striking, and she mentally resolved it should be removed or destroyed, blaming herself that it had not been done before.

ROSE RATHER DESIRING THE PROOF OF HER HUSBAND'S MEMORY OF SYMPATHIZE OF HER SACRIFICE.

Instead of appearing bashful and overawed at the sight of a stranger lady richly dressed, the child walked fearlessly up to her, looked earnestly in her face, and uttered a few words in Hindostani; then, finding she was not understood, turned coldly away.

"This is Lady Boothroyd," exclaimed Hester, secretly vexed; "a very great and rich lady, who never saw your mother. Pray excuse her, your ladyship; she is so young."

At the name of Boothroyd, Lillian looked at if she were trying to recollect something; and when she was about to speak again, the visitor rose to depart.

"On my return from London," she said, "I trust to hit on some means by which to benefit your since without wounding your feelings. Farewell," she added, with a sigh, "which I can too well understand. I need not bid you be kind to your niece, for I perceive that she has already secured herself second your hearts."

Then kissing the infantile victim of her treachery, the well-intended woman quitted the cottage.

"That's a good lady, if ever there was one!" exclaimed Simon Gee, as he watched her departure from the window. "She is going to Mark Baynes—on some kind errand, I'll warrant."

"No doubt," repeated Hester; "his wife was always a great favorite with her ladyship. Mark, by all accounts," she added, "is not as steady as he should be; and the neighbors do say that he will be obliged to give up the cottage and hand to Sir Norman. He is fonder of his gun than the plow."

"Sorry to hear it," said the weaver, resuming his seat at the loom, "for there be worse men in the world than poor Mark, though he be a sort of ne'er-do-well."

"I have called to see you, Rose, before quitting the Hall," said Lady Boothroyd, on the entering the cottage; "for you are aware that I take an interest in your welfare. Sit down; you seem unsteady. *I guess the cause.*"

The cause!" faltered the startled wife.

"Yes!" continued the lady, "suddenly." I heard the steward bill Sir Norman that your husband had not paid his last half year's rent, and now another term is all but due. Give la no friend of Mark; but do not stain yourself unduly. I came to—"

"O I thank you, my lady—a thousand times!" interrupted Rose, with the air of a person suddenly relieved from an oppressive fear. "The money will be paid in time."

"From your portion?" observed the artful woman: "I thought that had been squandered long since."

"From my husband's labor," replied the former, proudly. "He now works as hard as any one in the place; it is his fields early and late."

"*Some* also?"

"Since—he's a long time now, my lady," answered Rose, confusedly.

"Ah! working for her it," said the mistress of Meldown Park; "for I had heard a far different tale, and a sad one. They told me not only that the money left by your grandfather was spent, but that you had parted with many things you never ought to have sacrificed, especially your *Bible if presented you with when you quitted the school.*"

"Who could have told your ladyship that?" exclaimed the unsuspecting woman, eagerly. "Who could have been so cruel?" Believe me, I have done nothing of the kind."

An incredulous smile appeared on the features of her visitor.

"I can convince you, my lady," added the speaker, joyfully; at the same time going to an old-fashioned chest of drawers, and producing the sacred volume. "There it is!"

She placed it on the table with a triumphant air. Lady Boothroyd opened it at the title-page. As she expected, proof was there of the sacrifice: she had written her name on the day of presentation, it had been torn out. All that remained of the writing was—

"Given to Rose Mayfly, as a reward for good conduct."

The rest was wanting.

"Who could have been so cruel?" exclaimed Rose, deeply mortified when she saw the mutilated leaf.

"I shall I tell you?" replied her ladyship, fixing her keen gray eyes upon the countenance of the unsuspecting wife, to watch the effect of her words: "Your husband."

"Mark! O, my lady, what should he tear it out for?"

"I told his gun with on New Year's eve," answered her ladyship, deliberately, "the night that Springthorpe was murdered."

The speaker, who had acted throughout with the skill and tact of an experienced detective, drew from her note-case the blood-stained half-sheet fragment of paper, and compared it with the mutilated leaf on the table. The proof was clear, no doubt that it had formed a part of the same page. The words, "by Lady Boothroyd" completed the inscription. The evidence was perfect.

"I am exceedingly sorry for you," she continued. "Mark is the murderer of the unfortunate keeper, and this is the terrible proof of his guilt."

For several minutes the unhappy woman looked like one stunned by some unexpected blow, confused and only half comprehending her misery; but when its full extent became apparent—when she felt that the life of the man she so devotedly loved was forfeited, a cry of agony escaped her, and, falling on her knees, she grasped the dress of her visitor.

"Spare him, my lady!" she exclaimed, half choking with terror; "spare him, in the name of Him whose mercy the best of us must one day seek. He did not do it designedly—he could not, for cruelty is abhorrent to his nature. Ask whom you will, there is not a neighbor in St. Faith's to speak an ill word against poor Mark: he is my husband—we have been only two years married. I love him. Oh, yes, with all the fondness I have him dearly, for I know his heart. Spare him, and I will bless you night and day, pray for you and yours, be your slave. Oh, trample on me, crush me, kill me, do anything you please, but spare the father of my unborn child!"

These words, the promptings of nature's eloquence, broken by sighs and tears, produced one effect upon the hearer. If they failed to touch her heart, they at least convinced her that, to screen her husband, Rose would consent to any act, however degrading.

"It is a serious thing," she said, "to conceal a murder."

"But this is no murder," sobbed the wretched wife, wringing her hands. "It must have been accident."

"The coroner and jury have pronounced it so," added her ladyship, with cold deliberation, "and if once Sir Norman obtains the proof in his hands—"

But he will not obtain it," interrupted Rose, guessing her supplications. "Give me that fatal leaf, my lady, and I will depend upon you. You are a rich and noble lady," she added, "I am poor and very humble. What good will it do you to bring poor Mark to justice? It can't restore the dead, but it will condemn me to shame, to years of misery so sad and hopeless, that death presented with it were mercy."

"I have dealt with this paper," observed her visitor, at the same time replacing it in her note-case, "and have declared it to be lost, and therefore not altogether unnecessary, for Rose, in her present state of excitement as if she felt inclined to take it from her by force.

"On one condition I may feel disposed to give it up to you, or rather, to your husband," she added, emphatically.

"Condition—name it! That we give up Old Cottage and fields? Willingly! anything, only spare my husband the shame of Bulbere me. I have done nothing of the kind."

"Write a letter to Sir Norman, stating that you are a favorite with her ladyship. Mark, by all accounts," she added, "is not as steady as he should be; and the neighbors do say that he will be obliged to give up the cottage and hand to Sir Norman. He is fonder of his gun than the plow."

"Sorry to hear it," said the weaver, resuming his seat at the loom, "for there be worse men in the world than poor Mark, though he be a sort of ne'er-do-well."

"I have called to see you, Rose, before quitting the Hall," said Lady Boothroyd, on the entering the cottage; "for you are aware that I take an interest in your welfare. Sit down; you seem unsteady. *I guess the cause.*"

"The cause!" faltered the startled wife.

"Yes!" continued the lady, "suddenly." I heard the steward bill Sir Norman that your husband had not paid his last half year's rent, and now another term is all but due. Give la no friend of Mark; but do not stain yourself unduly. I came to—"

"O I thank you, my lady—a thousand times!" interrupted Rose, with the air of a person suddenly relieved from an oppressive fear. "The money will be paid in time."

"From your portion?" observed the artful woman: "I thought that had been squandered long since."

"From my husband's labor," replied the former, proudly. "He now works as hard as any one in the place; it is his fields early and late."

"*Some* also?"

"Since—he's a long time now, my lady," answered Rose, confusedly.

"Ah! working for her it," said the mistress of Meldown Park; "for I had heard a far different tale, and a sad one. They told me not only that the money left by your grandfather was spent, but that you had parted with many things you never ought to have sacrificed, especially your *Bible if presented you with when you quitted the school.*"

"Who could have told your ladyship that?" exclaimed the unsuspecting woman, eagerly. "Who could have been so cruel?" Believe me, I have done nothing of the kind."

An incredulous smile appeared on the features of her visitor.

"I can convince you, my lady," added the speaker, joyfully; at the same time going to an old-fashioned chest of drawers, and producing the sacred volume. "There it is!"

She placed it on the table with a triumphant air. Lady Boothroyd opened it at the title-page. As she expected, proof was there of the sacrifice: she had written her name on the day of presentation, it had been torn out. All that remained of the writing was—

"Given to Rose Mayfly, as a reward for good conduct."

The rest was wanting.

"Who could have been so cruel?" exclaimed Rose, deeply mortified when she saw the mutilated leaf.

"Shall I tell you?" replied her ladyship, fixing her keen gray eyes upon the countenance of the unsuspecting wife, to watch the effect of her words: "Your husband."

"Mark! O, my lady, what should he tear it out for?"

"I told his gun with on New Year's eve," answered her ladyship, deliberately, "the night that Springthorpe was murdered."

The speaker, who had acted throughout with the skill and tact of an experienced detective, drew from her note-case the blood-stained half-sheet fragment of paper, and compared it with the mutilated leaf on the table. The proof was clear, no doubt that it had formed a part of the same page. The words, "by Lady Boothroyd" completed the inscription. The evidence was perfect.

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THE NEW YORK LEDGER

No sooner did the anxious wife perceive her loss, than the hope which had hitherto sustained her vanished; she lost all confidence in her visitor's promise of mercy.

"I must see her," exclaimed her husband, thoughtfully. "It is my only chance, for flight without money is impossible."

It was in vain that the anxious wife attempted to combat with his resolution. He listened to her timidly and gratefully, but remained firm in it; and he was right.

Here, in her simplicity and ignorance of the world, finally imagined that any quiet nook in a distant part of the country would conceal them. He knew that the ministers of justice once set upon his track, foreign could not hide him.

Having come to this decision, Mark laid aside his working clothes, and dressed himself for his visit to the Hall.

If his silence to his wife under such circumstances were painful to her feelings, our readers can imagine what the agony of her suspense must have been during his return.

As the poor fellow—for, despite his past misconduct, there were many good and redeeming qualities in his nature—quitted his home by the front door with the desperate determination of a man who has set his all upon one stake, his companion and fellow poacher, Sanders, crept stealthily away from the back of the house, where he had been listening to the conversation. He, too, had been out on New Year's eve, and fired on the keepers when the men of the party; and consequently, he had alarmed him, for, on seeing Lady Boothroyd and the steward leave the outside of the house, he concealed himself till the return of her husband, in order to overhear what had passed.

"It is all right," he muttered to himself, as he withdrew. "I be safe enough, seeing her ladyship has *the proof* that it was Mark, and not I, what hurt us," he added; "his wife be too great a favorite for that."

In his joy at having the weight removed from his soul—not his heart, for it was four, not remorse, that haunted him—he hastened to communicate to the public-house, instead of returning to his labor.

Although Mark Rayner was only absent three hours, they appeared so many ages to his trembling wife, who, with her pale, anxious face glued, as it were, to the window which commanded the road leading from the Park, awaited his return.

At cry of joy broke from her lips at last. Mark was standing. She could not hear his footsteps although the distance, and the tears which dimmed her sight rendered his features indistinct, she knew well his form, his air, his walk, and they seldom erra.

"He stop is quick," she murmured. "Is it good or ill news that he brings with him?" Oh, his suspense is painful! I will not bear it—I will continued, after a pause, "for sorrow's peace is laggard. He see me; he waves his hand to me. Bless him, bless him. Thank God! my fears are deceived me. Bless her! bless her!"

When Mark entered the cottage, his wife's agitation was so great that she could not speak; but her eyes were more eloquent than words.

"Saved!" he whispered, as he folded her in his arms. "Saved!"

Never did a more grateful prayer rise from the suffering heart than the silent one which flew forced to Heaven for her benefactress, as she drooped her.

"You saw her ladyship?" she exclaimed, at last.

"Yes."

"And she has given you back the terrible proof?"

"Not yet."

"But she will do so?"

"When the conditions are fulfilled—"

"Conditions!" she repeated, faintly; "true, true. I had forgotten them. What is it she exacts? That we give up our home, and quit it forever? Willingly, for here sad thoughts and vain regrets would ever haunt us."

"Wife," said Mark Rayner, taking her by the hand, "I promised to fulfill them, but it depends on you whether I do so or not. Had I refused, I should have left the Hall a prisoner. Her honorable ladyship," he continued, with a bitter smile on the word honorable, "exacts that we leave St. Faith's, and fly to a foreign land."

"To the end of the earth!" exclaimed the grateful woman; "for there is safety."

"It is not the only condition," added her husband, slowly.

His wife regarded him uneasily.

"I must set the part of a thief, to escape the doom of a murderer."

"A thief!"

"And steal Lillian, the child of my old companion, Harry Gee."

"Steal Lillian!"

"Such are the terms on which I may be permitted to hide my shame and repentance in another land. It will break old Simon's heart."

"But why commit such a heartless, useless crime?" demanded Ken. "I cannot understand it. I see no motive."

"Lady Boothroyd declares that it will be impossible to forget the events of the past year so long as the child remains at St. Faith's, that her presence will be a continual source of irritation, and keep up the feeling between Sir Norman and his cousin."

"And you consented?"

"I did," replied Mark, coloring with shame, for the love of life was strong. "I thought of you—of the unborn babe that soon will call me father."

"It could only have been to try you, Mark," exclaimed his wife, to whose sense and upright mind the crime seemed dark and hideous, as the reason for perpetrating it were trivial and insufficient. Had she lived more in the world, she would have taught her one great truth—that to steal one cent out of a hundred the greatest theirs the motive.

"Do do not know her," observed her husband, timidly. "Her heart is so completely a stranger to every sentiment of humanity as yours is to vice. I pointed out to her how cruel Simon Gee and Hesse loved the child; the misery its loss would inflict upon them; the doubt, the agony of years it must entail. I spoke in vain—she remained cold to stone."

"Did Lady Boothroyd make you no reply?" demanded Ken, still more and more surprised.

"Yes, one. The golden or obedience."

The fearful shudder which ran through the frame of his honest decided the violence of the contest between love and her strict sense of right.

"Poor Lillian!" she murmured. "It is dreadful; but there is no other alternative. If we can stop the crime, I will atone it," she added, "by proving a mystery to her."

"She is not to remain with us," said Mark, swelling the gaze of his wife. "I am to deliver the child to her ladyship in London. She has promised to educate and provide for her."

Reckless and disregard as the speaker had been, no pecuniary consideration could have induced him to commit the act demanded of him, or his wife to sanction it; but terror did. Both were young, and in nature's coarse had years of love and happiness before them. If Ken fell, it was not without a struggle.

Poor, gentle reader, are you condemn her—remember the behavior of her husband's sister's angels have fallen before.

If had no long been known in the village that the Rayners were behind-hand with their rent, but little surprise was expressed when, at an early hour the following day, the bailiff took possession of their cottage and land. More than one friend stopped forward with offers of assistance, but were declined—Mark and his wife had determined to emigrate; and, in order to prevent suspicion respecting Sir Norman, stated that he had acted liberally to them.

No such generosity did that the relative had been agreed between Lady Boothroyd and the unwilling instruments of her evil designs.

Nearly all the inhabitants of St. Faith's came to bid them goodbye; some marveled at the suddenness of their departure, others regretted it; all offered advice, a few consolation.

"Sanders, I shall miss you," said he long after them, Mark," observed Sanders, "for I have taken a dislike to the place since you left it, especially when there are gone."

The severest trial was the parting with the widower and his wife, who forced upon them numerous little tokens of kind feelings and good wishes, which hastened and yet delayed the hour of parting.

"Take 'em," said the old man, "don't 'ee be proud; they will remind you of the old times, when I'll Keep up thee courage in a foreign land till they be carried the means to come back to us. To be sure, I shall be dead and buried," he added, "but my heart will be yonder."

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Rest could only reply by her tears.

Many of the villagers accompanied them for several miles on the road, and only took leave of the wanderers when the coach, which was to convey them to Hedgeford, was in sight. Who can imagine how soon Mark was to revisit his native place for the crime! that would bring him back! Had they even guessed at such a thing, their silent and kind wishes had been changed to curses.

He was past middle age, with a weary expression of face, but still he was, to the widow which commanded the road leading from the Park, awaited his return.

A cry of joy broke from her lips at last. Mark was standing. She could not hear his footsteps although the distance, and the tears which dimmed her sight rendered his features indistinct, she knew well his form, his air, his walk, and they seldom erra.

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Poor old Simon accompanied him to The Elms. The worthy magistrate listened to their statement with astonishment. He could perceive no motive for the outrage. And his visitors had to repeat them more than once, before he could bring himself to believe its truthfulness.

"I will seek my cousin, my brother's child," exclaimed the heart-broken weaver. "If I beg my way, and tramp the country through."

"I scarcely know what to advise." observed the magistrate. "Your story is so strange, so unnatural. All that I can do, I will do. A description of the child shall be sent to the police, both ports and railroads will be watched, and a reward must be offered."

"Let it be a large one," said the farmer; "I will guarantee that it shall be forthcoming. There is not a man in St. Faith's but will contribute, for Lillian, in some sort, belongs to us all.

"I will see to that," answered the magistrate. "There are guides been lurking in the neighborhood lately?"

The news of his visitors had either seen or heard of any.

"It hasn't the gipsies' work!" exclaimed the honest farmer. "They have nought to do wi' it."

"Have you any suspicion?" demanded Mr. Simon.

"Yes," replied the farmer resolutely.

"Is he your cousin, my son, to speak on?"

"Well then," answered Mr. Muter, deliberately, "it be my belief that Sir Norman Boothroyd has a hand in it."

The gentleman reflected for several minutes before he replied; then, with a look which the farmer construed into a sneer, he said, "Sir Norman Boothroyd has a motive for the crime."

"Rubbish!" exclaimed the visitor, who had accompanied the baronet from all participation in such an act; for though he knew him to be both unprincipled and violent, he was also aware that, in defence was, to say the least of it, quite as strong in him as in common men, and he was no coward.

"Impossible," he said, "may almost impossible. Sir Norman has no private knowledge that can outlawed his rents for several days. He has been ill, exceedingly ill. Besides, why should he descend to so mean a device to prevent the child from the eyes of the world, but render him amenable to the laws of his country?"

The accuser shook his head—he was silent, but not convinced.

"There is think it is the baronet," said Simon Gee, "for it was only two days sh' her ladyship sent to say of his best horse, which I refused, as I offered to assist us in providing for it, though Heaven knows I can ill afford it."

"Lady Boothroyd is too estimable a person," observed Mr. Thornton, "to lend her countenance to any such scheme as this."

"That she be," exclaimed both the visitors; a change would be positive disobedient to the child—if she had her will."

The magistrate, with all his shrewdness, was of the same opinion—a proof that the little cadgical drama acted at Meldrum Park had been well acted, since it had deceived so many spectators.

CHAPTER XIII.

There were two persons—at present rather unimportant ones in the progress of our tale, but who have much influence over it—still back to be introduced to us it proceeds—who looked upon the appearance of Lillian Gee at Meldrum Park, and in his family from Meldrum Park with regret, Alice and her play-fellow, He son of Mr. Thornton.

Of the latter we have already introduced before, but then it was only for a time. The Elms was the boy's home, and Meldrum Park was only "The Elms," when, if unreasonable pride on one hand, and a feeling, usually independent of it, on the other, suspended, as it frequently did, the intercourse between the two families, the children, who had been playmates from their infancy, were generally contrived to see each other.

Alice Boothroyd was a stranger with her French governess or waiting-maid, William, mounted on their ponies, would either to strangers or meet them—by accident, of course. Both were as young and innocent, that neither misunderstood her dear companion's delight at their meeting, or feeling than more childish friendship could possibly have existed between them. Alice was a sickly child, and was kept much within doors, and her play-ground was the garden, the park, the banks of the cricket, rowing matches on the Thames; in short, of boyhood's sports and pleasures.

In regard to any great skill in intelligent and lovely girl retained all those things in her memory, which William Thornton, with an amount to love, we know not how else to designate it. Not love as the world comprehends the word, but love in its purest sense, the love of two hearts, the love in its full, an entirely pure, and unselfish affection, and as the tender bud the genial ray of spring's first sunbeam, and had grown with its growth, and expand into a luxurious flower, provided no rude step crushed its unclosed leaves.

Such was the love which existed between the boy and girl, which the accused Mr. Thornton, when he left the cottage had been entered and their voices carried off.

The old man clasped his hands in despair, as he regarded the vacant bed.

"It is still warm," exclaimed his wife. "The robber cannot be far off—besides we heard her footsteps. Oh, Simon, you must not be robbed of husband by the arm ;" run to fierce Hunter's call up the neighbors! he may be overtaken yet!"

It was to no effect. The old man's limbs refused from them, or speculate upon the motives which led to the crime. Simon Gee, on the other hand, resolved, to the house of the farmer; within the distance of a few minutes the village was astir. The news in a few minutes the village was astir. The news of their loss excited the utmost surprise and indignation: such a thing had never before been heard of in St. Faith's, and long ere dawn a dozen horsemen, at least, were scouring the country in every direction, so great was the sympathy felt for the orphan of poor Harry and his sorrowful relative.

It is almost needless to say that farmer Muter was one of the most active in the pursuit, or that it was fruitless. The plan had been so artfully laid, that even his intelligence was at fault. And on the return of the villagers, as a last resource, he resolved to consult Mr. Thornton.

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"It is still warm," exclaimed his wife. "The robber cannot be far off—besides we heard her footsteps. Oh, Simon, you must not be robbed of husband by the arm ;" run to fierce Hunter's call up the neighbors! he may be overtaken yet!"

It was to no effect. The old man's limbs refused from them, or speculate upon the motives which led to the crime. Simon Gee, on the other hand, resolved, to the house of the farmer; within the distance of a few minutes the village was astir. The news in a few minutes the village was astir. The news of their loss excited the utmost surprise and indignation: such a thing had never before been heard of in St. Faith's, and long ere dawn a dozen horsemen, at least, were scouring the country in every direction, so great was the sympathy felt for the orphan of poor Harry and his sorrowful relative.

It is almost needless to say that farmer Muter was one of the most active in the pursuit, or that it was fruitless. The plan had been so artfully laid, that even his intelligence was at fault. And on the return of the villagers, as a last resource, he resolved to consult Mr. Thornton.

"Lady Boothroyd!" repeated the astonished magistrate, "she be a poor, little child, not older than myself, shut up in such a strange-looking place, and crying as if her heart would break. Do come and let her out."

"A child!" repeated the artful woman, dreadfully annoyed.

"Yes, and so pretty!"

"Have you seen her?"

"Yes, mamma."

"And has *Rosa seen her too?*"

"No, mamma," answered Alice: "I left Jane talking with one of the keepers, and found out the place alone; it is an odd and and there; pray, come," she added, taking hold of her dress, as if to detain her by force, "and you will see if you will play here."

Lady Boothroyd was not a person easily thrown off her balance; but the discovery of her victim made by her own child disconcerted her; she knew her character better by memory was, and the such a circumstance would remain indelibly impressed upon it.

"She is a wicked gipsy girl, who has been sent there to punish her."

Alice looked in her face. Her mother read the natural, the involuntary doubt in her eyes, and blushed as her own words of children.

Truth is the shadow of God, the emblem and visible sign of His presence upon earth; and it is an awful thing when parents who, next to God, should command the respect and veneration of their offspring, descend to falsehood with them; the lie may pass unnoticed for a time—years even may elapse before the child is sufficiently to detect and meditate upon it, to mourn over it it virtuous and well disposed, or justly feel indignant from straightforward, honest sincerity by the example of evil.

But since you have interceded for her," added her ladyship, "I will give orders for her to be released."

"Oh, thank you, mamma," exclaimed her daughter, joyfully.

"On one condition."

"Anything! I will be so good mademoiselle shall not have the complain of my lessons and exercise for a week to come."

Her mother was unable to understand that the condition confided in keeping absolute silence to any one on the subject of the child. Alice, who loved little ginger girl, as she called her, in the old position. Alice promised, delighted at having obtained her mother's consent, and hastened to her and such terms.

But their way through the park they encountered Jane, who, alarmed for the safety of her young charge, had been seeking her on every part of the grounds except the right one.

"It is the way you attend to your young mistress," exclaimed Lady Boothroyd, angrily.

The girl attempted to offer an excuse, but was interrupted by being sharply ordered to return at once to the Hall.

Sir Norman was chatting with the Reverend Dr. Bell, when the servant announced the visit of Alice previous to the departure of the latter for the day, when his wife and friend of the drawing-room. Although her ladyship felt anything but in a sociable humor, she at once said to herself that her husband's sentiments and words; it was hardly worth while to make a change in the world, for few remaining hours of her stay at Meldrum; the character might be somewhat irksome, but then she was nearly over.

"Where have you been?" inquired her husband. is a tone so full of displeasure, which had they been alone, he would not have ventured to indulge in.

"Knowing the hurtful, disobedient conduct of the heart-of carriage that has been attempted, you will be happy to learn myself of my feelings. Have been uneasy at your absence."

Her ladyship listened to the reproach with apparent humility, and resumed and conjugal admonition.

The clergyman looked, or attempted to look, more and more horrified at each succeeding adjective, and when the end of the sentence arrived, his feelings in a deep-drawn sigh, wrung from him, no doubt, by his profound conviction of the depravity of human nature.

"Oh, Doctor," here exclaimed little Alice, suddenly remembering the guests who had not heard in the pavilion," what is the meaning of "

The rector raised his eyebrows.

"Why, blue ms?" he exclaimed, with evident surprise, "they are Hindostani! Where could she have learned them?"

"Mademoiselle Flavalin is always permitting her to read some almost novel, instead of reading to her proper studies," answered her ladyship, hastily, for she felt herself compelled.

Lady Boothroyd rang the bell, and Allen, at a loss to understand how she had offended, was soon in a punishment, to the room.

The visitors soon afterwards took their leave, and the circumstance was forgotten.

For nearly four-and-twenty hours Mark and Lillian had remained close prisoners in the pavilion in the park, without even severely from cold and hunger, but the child the least; for the guilty, though not hardened one, had the deep, silent sword a biscuit in his pocket which Rose had placed there before parting with him, and which he just resorted to the orphan, to whom he contrived to impart partial warmth, by holding her in his arms.

Lillian, though terrified at the downfall of the bed which he had taken with her when he stole her.

Mark, after long and tedious hours of self-confinement he had ample time to reflect on his past life, and the fearful crime he had come to perpetrate, felt no neglected; and remorse and suffering wrought a wholesome lesson.

"I am indeed be shuddering like a miserable thief," he murmured, "almost within sight of my home and family. Alice! I am! he sobbed," and the worst of thirteen, for I have robbed poor Simon of his only consolation, and the child of her parents. Oh, that I had known when he was to these for making his home desolate?"

Lillian, who seemed bitterly the unprincipled woman who had compelled him to act so degraded a part.

The thought of Rose, and the cruel anxiety she must be suffering, haunted him.

Hunger, however, was the most powerful torment that her prisoners were in darkness. Lillian opened her eyes at the sudden flash, and gazed upon her enemy in silent wonder.

"I have brought you food," continued the speaker, "do refresh yourself while I draw the child; we have not an instant to lose."

The instrument of her crime was too hungry as well as too fearful not to do as she directed.

Lillian, following her ladyship noticed, with anger, that a slender chain of gold, which, on her visit to the cottage of the weaver she had noticed

round the neck of her victim, was gone, and she imperatively demanded it. It was in vain that Mark declared he had neither seen nor taken it; his assertions were listened to with scorn and disbelief.

"I tell you that I have it not, my lady," he repeated. "Why should I lie to you? It can't be for the value; and even if I had taken it," he added, doggedly, for his temper began to be roused, "I have as much right to the trinket as yourself. You are no relative of poor Lillian!"

The last observation silenced, although it failed to convince her, and the present was neither the time nor place for disputes, especially as her polite ladyship possessed a certain means, as she imagined, of extorting it from him.

"Follow me," said she, as soon as the child was dressed, and she considered that they had had sufficient time to refresh themselves.

"Where to, my lady?"

"The stables."

"Bargo, the groom, sleeps there," observed Mark, hesitatingly.

"I have sent him to Exeter, purposely, that he may be out of the way, replied the mistress of Meldown Hall; for you must take Sir Norman's hunter, Milton, ride him as far as Exeter, and then turn him loose; if lost it cannot be helped."

"But why all these precautions?" inquired the man.

"The fools of St. Faith's have been scouring the country in every direction," said her ladyship. "And I need not remind you how excessively disagreeable it would be to both of us should you be taken,—not that there is much fear," she added. "Milton is the fastest horse in the shire, *and you ride for your life.*"

The last words were pronounced with an emphasis that made her hearer shudder.

"I leave for London," continued the speaker, "in the morning. You already know where to meet me with your charge. Be faithful, and you shall find me grateful."

On reaching the stable, Mark hastily saddled the horse; and mounting, with Lillian before him, only waited for his last orders to start.

"You have sufficient money for your journey?"

"More than sufficient," answered the husband of Rose, bitterly.

"Away, then; the same key that gave you admittance to the park will give you egress by the private gate on the common. Take the path through the home preserves. The keepers are all watching in the north wood; and remember the penalty if you are taken."

Mark put spurs to the spirited animal, and speedily disappeared in the direction indicated. As he rode along he reflected upon the extraordinary conduct of Lady Boothroyd in thus risking her reputation. "What could Lillian possibly be to her?" he asked himself, "or she to Lillian?" and as for the motives alleged he was too shrewd to believe a word of them.

"There is some secret," he muttered; "but why should I torment myself? Were I to discover it I could do no good, for I am completely in her power, and she is not one to spare those who thwart her. The happiness of Rose, too, is in her hands, and that thought makes me a coward."

"God help the innocent child!" he added, "whom she has deprived of all natural protection. I would rather a thousand times take it with me to a foreign land than trust it in her keeping. But I am chained like a dog; the halter dangling before my eyes, and must submit."

With this reflection he pursued his way.

CHAPTER XIV.

How often have we heard the thoughtless boast, "That everything may be had in London for money?" A terrible assertion, and not less terrible than true; painting in a few brief words, more graphically than the long-drawn annual reports of visiting magistrates, gaol chaplains, and numerous societies for the reformation of criminals can do, the depravity which, like a virulent infection, has tainted more or less all classes in this our modern Babylon. We say "all classes," advisedly: rich and poor are equally included in the reproach; for were there no purchasers, there would be no venders of crime.

The stream of moral corruption, like every other stream, obeys certain generic laws, and can only be stopped effectually at the fountain head: drawing off its branches is a mere palliative, not a cure; and we shall consider the work of reformation commenced in earnest when Englishmen can no longer boast—

That everything may be had in London for money.

Mr. Silex had not forgotten his promise to Lady Boothroyd—to seek out a fit and proper person to take charge of the orphan Lillian—and hence his journey to London. Not that it was by any means necessary, as he pretended, to visit the metropolis for that purpose. He knew of one already; but the worthy agent had a project of his own, which required his personal superintendence in the carrying out.

He never trusted to letters.

The individual selected for this honorable employment was no other than his own twin-brother, Mike, the returned convict, the uncle and tutor of Jack Manders. As a matter of course, the confidential steward of a wealthy Devonshire baronet looked upon himself as far too respectable to acknowledge, but not to employ, him; and, though everything like correspondence or intercourse had long since ceased between them, had never lost sight of the idea that his relative might one day prove useful. He had even carried his recollections of the ties of blood between them so far as to forward him occasionally trifling sums of money, but always by so indirect a channel that every attempt to trace his own whereabouts or position failed.

Mike—or, as he was familiarly called by those who knew him, Old Mike—believed his brother Andrew to be rich; and, instead of feeling grateful for the assistance doled out to him, frequently cursed him for his meanness in not providing more liberally for his wants. There was some show of reason, perhaps, in this resentment: for in early life they had been mixed up in more than one questionable transaction together.

Like many of his class, the returned convict, when he grew old, made up for the absence of personal courage and daring by cunning: he found it quite as profitable to train others to crime and share the fruit of their misdeeds, and far less dangerous.

Jack was not the first victim he had led to vice; nor, in all probability, destined to prove the last.

The old man and his nephew were seated by a comfortable fire, at breakfast, when a smart rap announced a visitor. Mike looked carefully round, to make sure that no tell-tale article had been left about the room; and, having satisfied himself on that point, directed the lad to unbar the door.

Mr. Silex entered the cottage with that peculiar smile which disclosed his shark-like teeth, upon his features. He was no longer dressed in the top boots and cast-off coat of his late master, but in a respectable suit of black, the coat buttoned to the chin, in which attire his long, lank figure resembled an overgrown leech with a human head.

As is the case frequently with twins, there existed a striking resemblance between the two brothers, and Jack was so struck with it, that he stood with his eyes wide open, glancing alternately from one to the other.

The steward looked first at Mike, and then at the door, intimating that he wished to be alone with him.

"Here, Jack," said his uncle, offering him a shilling, "go and amuse yourself for an hour or two."

"Plaguy cold out of doors," muttered the boy, whose curiosity was excited.

A look from his relative warned him that he was not to be trifled with, so he caught up his cap from the breakfast-table, and quitted the house. How he amused himself will appear in another place.

"You have not forgotten me," observed Mr. Silex, for the first time breaking silence.

"I never forget any one or anything," muttered the convict, "not even that I have a brother."

"I should think not," answered his visitor, sharply, "considering the sums he has sent you; but you were always ungrateful, Mike."

"Ungrateful!" repeated the former; "and what have I to be grateful for? For a pittance cast as men cast a bone occasionally to a hungry dog—I can't even see the hand that gives it."

"*You might bite it,*" observed the rich brother, coolly.

"What need of all this hide and seek with me?" demanded the convict, in a tone which showed how deeply he felt irritated. "Why not say at once where you live?"

"I receive no visitors."

"But I might write to you occasionally."

"Or letters," added his relative.

Mike declared, with an oath, that this time, at least, he would be satisfied—he could not endure such unnatural suspicions—they hurt his feelings.

"Which are very sensitive, no doubt," answered his brother, not in the least degree alarmed at his bluster and vehemence. "I have nothing to reproach myself with. I have done quite as much as my limited circumstances up to the *present time* permitted; and now, when I have taken the trouble of a journey to London, to point out the means of *bettering your condition materially*, I find you, as usual, passionate and ungrateful."

At the words "bettering your condition," Mike, who had interrupted him with sundry "poohs" and "pshaws," suddenly became attentive.

"You know, Andrew," he said, "that you could always persuade me to anything."

"But to be reasonable," continued the steward.

"It's a hard case if a man can't speak his mind to his own brother," observed the convict; "ain't we twins? But what's your game? Let's hear it."

"Can you be faithful?"

"You know I can, to my own cost."

"In the affair I am about to propose to you," said Mr. Silex, who had his own reasons for avoiding all allusions to the past, "there is little danger."

"And less money," exclaimed Mike. "I know your scale of payments of old. But go on, I'll hear all you have to say."

"On the contrary, there is a considerable sum to be gained."

"Which I must share with you, I suppose," muttered the ruffian, "as I did before."

"Not a penny."

"Well, *do* speak out," cried his interesting relative, "I can't bear to feel you twining and creeping like a snake round your purpose. It ain't my way."

"Impetuous as ever," ejaculated his brother. "What I have to propose to you is to take charge of a child about seven years old."

"*Charge!* well, go on."

"But you must not seek to discover the name of the lady who will bring her to you," continued the steward, "which, by-the-by, would not be very easy, seeing that she resides in the country, at a great distance from the metropolis."

"As you do?"

"Exactly."

"And how much do you propose?" demanded Mike.

"You must make the bargain with her yourself," answered Mr. Silex. "As a hint for your guidance, I may as well tell you that she can afford to pay liberally. You see I lose no occasion of furthering your interest," he added.

"And when will she be here?"

"To-morrow."

The convict leant his head on his hand, and reflected for some time before making up his mind.

"Look you, Andrew," he said, at last, "if it's only to take charge of a child, and I am to be well paid for it, I don't mind. But I'll run no risks—that is to say, *great risks.* You understand me. I am getting an old man, now, and am living respectably."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, indeed," repeated his brother, "as respectably as those who think themselves my betters. For the law can't touch me for what others do."

"That is to say, you profit by their crimes," observed the agent of Lady Boothroyd. "I don't blame you. We are each of us philosophers in our way. But you are not more careful of your safety than I am of mine. What the party whom you will treat with may suggest or propose, it is impossible for me to divine. But I tell you that if you harm a hair of the child's head, it will cost you your life, and I never promise idly, as you know. Promise the lady what you like."

"You feel interested in the kid, then?"

"Greatly."

"From love?"

The steward opened his jaws, and once more displayed his shark-like teeth, as he indulged in a hearty laugh.

"Aye, I thought not," said Mike.

"Love!" repeated his visitor, restraining his mirth at last within due bounds; "to be sure I love her; she will one day be worth her weight in gold."

His hearer did not forget the words; the rest of the compact was soon made, one condition only being added, that when the lady brought the child, Mike was to treat the affair as though he had never heard of it before, and above all, not to let a word escape that could lead her to suspect he had any knowledge, either past or present, of the respectable Mr. Silex.

That settled, the speakers, after a brief discussion of family affairs, parted in a far more amicable spirit than they had met, little imagining, however, that every word of their conversation had been overheard by their nephew, Jack, who had been so unceremoniously dismissed from his breakfast with a shilling to amuse himself with, but who, instead of following the suggestion, crept stealthily round to the back of the cottage, climbed in at the wash-house window, and by this manœuver contrived to satisfy his curiosity.

To his astonishment he learnt that he had an uncle whom he had never seen or heard of before—an uncle who appeared respectable and well-to-do in the world, and the discovery inspired him with the hope of extricating himself from a mode of life he was getting tired of.

Naturally the boy was far from vicious; but reared in ignorance and vice hitherto, he had found no one to counsel or assist him, except in evil. Since the unaccountable disappearance of Richard Hoffman, he had felt sundry qualms and misgivings, lost no inconsiderable portion of his nerve and address, and felt quite chicken-hearted at the sight of a policeman.

"If he would only give me a character," he thought, "I might get a place; wouldn't I work. I can but ask him."

Having once come to this conclusion, he decided upon waylaying Mr. Silex on the bridge, and introducing himself to him. Whilst waiting his appearance, he could not avoid reflecting how pleasant it would be to walk about without fear of a hand being suddenly laid upon the collar of his jacket, to be able to look even a policeman in the face; and for the first time in his life he felt in love with honesty.

Although the steward considered his visit to his brother as too unexpected to admit of any arrangement for his being followed, still he was not without his suspicions, and cast his keen little gray eyes peeringly to the right and left, as he emerged from the Belvedere into the Westminster road. About half-way over the bridge he encountered Jack, who, pulling off his cap, confronted him in the center of the pavement.

"Go away, boy," said the old man, angrily, pretending not to recognize him; "I have nothing for you."

"Please, uncle, I am not a beggar," replied the boy.

The wretch started at the word "uncle," and would have hurried past him, but his nephew was not to be got rid of so easily.

"I want to speak with you, if you will let me," he added.

"With me?"

"Yes, uncle."

"I am not your uncle."

Jack gave him a knowing wink, and muttered a word, far more expressive than elegant, which sounded very like "gammon."

"It won't do," he exclaimed, shaking his round, terrier-like head; "I heard all you said to Mike in the crib about the child and the lady."

Here he gave him another wink, and Mr. Silex began to look exceedingly uncomfortable and bilious.

"Well, well!" said his relative, "I'll hear you—follow me."

Jack's heart bounded with delight. At last he had found a friend, as he imagined; and he walked after him, cap in hand, till they reached the paved court on the Westminster side of the bridge, when the old man suddenly stopped, and, fixing his eyes upon him, demanded what he had to say.

"I want a character," replied the boy.

Mr. Silex grinned at the *naivete* of his nephew. There was also something which tickled his fancy in the idea of his applying to him for one.

"And to get work," added the young pickpocket. "I am tired of running about the streets all night, and ashamed to show my face by day. Everybody seems to know how I gets a livin.' Not a boy in the road will play with me, though I am better dressed, and have twice as much money to spend as they have."

"And how do you get your living?"

"Oh, you know."

"How should I possibly know, when I never saw you till this morning?" observed the steward.

"I heard Mike tell you," answered Jack; who began shrewdly to suspect that his new-found relative cared as little for telling a lie as his old one.

"Why do you wish to leave your uncle, who has been a second father to you?"

"Because I ain't happy in my mind with him, ain't a doin' what is right," answered the poor boy, coloring deeply. "I shall be sure to be found out one day; and I know what follows, for I've often heard the old un, when he has thought me asleep, talk over Norfolk Island with his old pal, Jem Baxter—him as has the dancing gals. Perhaps you know him."

The respectable man shook his head.

"Well, you might a done, for he is a good friend of Mike's: They were lagged together; but that ain't nothing to do with it. I want to get out of this line of life; it don't suit me any longer. I can't bear it—afraid to show my face in the streets, and feel my heart thumping against my ribs if I happen to catch the eye of a peeler or a hand only touches my shoulder."

"What can I do for you?"

"Give me a character. I'll find work."

Mr. Silex drew himself up with an air of great severity. By his questions and apparent attention, he had detained his nephew till he saw a policeman sufficiently near, if necessary, to arrest him.

"Do you see that officer?" he said.

"Yes, uncle."

"You are an impertinent young rascal," continued his relative; "and if you presume to call me by that name again, I'll give you in charge for attempting to pick my pocket. I disown all connection with you. I cast you off. Begone," he added, pointing to the bridge, "and the way you came."

Jack stood for an instant the picture of astonishment. Suddenly the tears gushed into his eyes, and he turned indignantly away. His heart was too full for words; but from that hour the heartless wretch who could be deaf to the pleadings of his sister's son, had an enemy far more dangerous than any he had ever yet contended with. An enemy whose strength would increase as his gradually diminished—for youth is the spring-time of the future.

Jack, in common with the lads of his class, had his retreat or den, a very solitary one, whose locality even Uncle Mike was ignorant of. It was a disused sawpit in one of the numerous timber-yards in the Belvedere-road; a stack of timber had been piled over it, and by taking out one of the planks the freeholder, for such he might be considered in the most literal sense of the word, could creep in and evade all risk of detection by drawing the aforesaid plank into its place after him.

The bottom of the pit would have been both cold and damp but for the poor boy's precaution of filling it with straw and shavings, which he had done from time to time, as opportunity offered.

Into this retreat Jack crept, and curled himself up like some wild animal in its lair—not to sleep: his heart was too full for that, but to meditate.

"It's no use," he thought, "of my trying to do any good for myself; if I tell people I want to be honest they only laugh at me; and I ain't big enough to go for a soldier yet. It'll be Norfolk Island, I suppose, after all."

A cold shudder came over him as he came to this conclusion, and he turned over in his mind the horrors of the punishment as he had heard Baxter and Mike describe them,—the toil in gangs, chained like beasts of burden; the lash at the slightest breach of discipline; the rope for the commission of crime.

He wept bitterly; for the disappointment, and still more the harsh rebuff he had met with from his respectable relative, had wounded him sensibly; he would have prayed had he known how, but no one had ever taught him his prayers; true, he had seen churches, though he had never ventured to enter one, and had a confused notion of their use.

When we say that Jack would have prayed had he known how, we are far from feeling certain that he did not pray; for who shall say that the simple desire of good in one so ignorant and friendless, who had never experienced either a mother's fondness or a father's care, is not in the eyes of heaven a prayer?

We have no faith in instant conversions: few, in our opinion, become either suddenly good or suddenly wicked; the progress may be swift or slow, according to the soil in which the seeds are sown, but it requires time to ripen and bring forth fruit.

Unfortunately for the boy, he had no friendly monitor at hand to confirm him in his favorable impressions, to advise and console him; gradually he began to feel ashamed of his tears, and look upon them as what Mike would have termed want of pluck. No wonder, therefore, if the feeling of hatred towards Mr. Silex increased rather than decreased as he lay meditating in his retreat.

"The old rascal," he muttered to himself; "but I'll serve him out; he doesn't know his nephew Jack yet, but he shall know me; he won't let Mike know where he lives—I'll find it out: that's one thing I'll do for him; and I'll find out who his lady is: that's another. He'll give me in charge; will he? perhaps I may do the same thing for him; for though he does wear a fine black coat, and talks so proudly, it's my belief he ain't no better than the rest on us, and his brother as much as told him so."

Considering the treatment he had received, and the conversation he overheard, the conclusion was not a forced one.

It is a sad truth, but no less a one, that poverty and crime both tend to make children unnaturally precocious, on the same principle, no doubt, that the instinct of self-preservation is developed sooner in animals in their wild state than domestic ones. Jack had but one clue—a very slight one—but he determined to follow it perseveringly; he noticed, whilst talking with his uncle in a little paved court at the end of the bridge, that the soles of his boots were stained with gravel. On quitting his concealment he walked through every street in the neighborhood of the bridge, to discover, if possible, where any had been laid down. For a long time he was unsuccessful. At last he ventured into the park, and found that the parade in front of the Horse Guards was being repaired, and gravel spread in all directions.

Like the Indian hunter following a track, the first footprints of his prey were found.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

TO A DEAD MAIDEN.

Oh! thou pale sleeper, awake from thy trance—
Cheer our sad hearts by thy bright, loving glance;
Too sweet *thy* face to lie under the mound,
Too fair *thy* form to sleep in the cold ground.

Beautiful clay! tho' thou soon must be laid
In the dark grave, 'neath the sad cypress's shade,
One who is merciful, even as just,
Still will watch over thee, guarding thy dust.

RUINED.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"The man is ruined—hopelessly ruined!"

The words startled me.

"So bad as that?" said the indivual to whom the remark was made.

"Even so bad."

"Of whom are you speaking?" I ventured to ask.

"Of Jacob Atwood."

I started to my feet. He was one of my old, intimate, and long-tried friends.

"Ruined, did you say! That man ruined! Impossible!"

"There is no doubt of it. I received my information from those who have the best right to know."

"What has he done?" I asked, eagerly.

My question was received in silence, as if the meaning were not clearly apprehended.

"Is he a defaulter?"

"No." The answer showed surprise at my question.

"Has he betrayed an honorable trust reposed in him by his fellow-men?"

"No, sir; his integrity is without question. In all his public relations he was true as steel to principle."

"What then? Has he placed any portion of his property beyond the reach of creditors who have just claims upon him?"

"He has given up everything—even to the furniture of his house. Not a dollar has been retained, and he goes forth into the world a ruined man."

"O no," said I, speaking out warmly. "Not in any sense a ruined *man.* The merchant may be ruined, but, thank God! the *man* is whole."

The little company looked at me, for a moment or two, half in surprise.

"The man is all right," I went on. "Only the scaffolding, on which the workmen stood who were building up his character, has fallen. Erect, calm, noble, half-divine, he stands, now, in the sunshine and in the storm. Around his majestic brow the clouds may gather; upon it the tempests may beat; but he is immoveable in his great integrity."

Some smiled at my enthusiasm. To them there was nothing of the moral sublime in a ruined merchant. Others looked a little more thoughtful than before; and one said, feebly:

"There is something in that."

Something in that! I should think there was.

It was the first intelligence I had received of my friend's worldly misfortunes, and it grieved me. In the evening I went to see Jacob Atwood. The windows of the elegant residence where he had lived for years were closed. I looked up at the house—it had a deserted aspect. I rung the bell; no one answered my summons.

I could not repress the feeling of sadness that came over me. The trial must have been severe even for a brave heart like his.

"I must find him," said I. And I did find him; but far away from the neighborhood where merchant princes had their palace-houses. The house into which he had retired with his family looked small, and mean, and comfortless, in comparison with the elegant abode from which he had removed. I rung and was admitted. The parlor into which I was shown was a small room, and the furniture not much better than we often see in the houses of well-to-do mechanics, or clerks on moderate salaries. But everything was in order, and scrupulously neat.

I had made only a hurried observation, when Mr. Atwood entered. He looked something careworn—his face was paler than when I last saw him, his eye a little duller, his smile less cheerful. The marks of trial and suffering were plainly visible. It would have been almost a miracle had it been otherwise. But he did not exhibit the aspect of a ruined man. He grasped my hand warmly, and said it was pleasant to look into the face of an old friend. I offered him words of sympathy.

"The worst is over," he answered, with manly cheerfulness, "and nothing is lost which may not be regained. I have found the bottom, know where I am, and there is strength enough left in me to stand up securely amid the rushing waters. The best of all is, my property, which has been apportioned to my creditors, will pay every debt. That gives my heart its lightest pulsations."

"I heard that you were *ruined,*" said I, as we sat talking together; "but I find that the man is whole. Not a principle invaded by the enemy—not a moral sentiment lost—not a jewel in the crown of honor missing."

He took my hand, and grasping it hard, looked into my face steadily for some moments. Then, in a subdued voice, he made answer—

"I trust that it is even so, my friend. But there were seasons in the worse than Egyptian night through which I have passed, when the tempter's power seemed about to crush me. For myself I cared little; for my wife and children everything. The thought of seeing them go out from the pleasant home I had provided for them, and step down, far down, to a lower level in the social grade, half distracted me for a time. For them I would have braved everything but dishonor. I could not stoop to that. And so I passed the fiery ordeal, and have come out, I verily believe, a better man. No, no, no, my friend. I am not ruined. I have lost my fortune, but not my integrity."

And so the man stood firm. It was not in the power of any commercial disaster to ruin him. The storm raged furiously; the waves beat madly against him; but he stood immovable, for his feet were upon the solid rock of honor.

HOW TO BE VALUED.

BY GEORGIANNA HERBERT.

Girls, listen to some advice—you *need it* badly enough—there's not a question of that.

Don't give your beaux a chance to feel *sure* of you. It's bad for *them,* and it's worse for you. There are exceptions, to be sure; there *are* men who may be safely trusted with the knowledge that they are all in all to the heart of the woman they are wooing; but such ones *are deplorably few.* The ardor of most men lasts only so long as lasts their uncertainty. Keep them off, and they'll grow more and more devoted—bring them near, and they'll cool off as fast as a flat iron in the snow. Let them think you care little for them or their love, and they will try hard to become more worthy of your regard. Not flirt; not strive to wound their feelings—we don't mean that—humanity forbid! but don't make yourself *cheap;* just keep your own counsel: and the more hopelessly in love you are the more do you guard the knowledge of that fact from your lover. Keep it down and in, all that you possibly can, till the magic words are said that make you one; then take off the bands, but do it gradually—"grow upon him;" show him by degrees the strength of the passion which he has awakened in your soul.

FEAR OF ENEMIES.

It is a well known fact that most people are often guarded and cautious in their conduct, lest they afford to those persons who make

"Envy and crooked malice nourishment"

an opportunity to give vent to their venomous feelings; and to so great an extent is this desire to escape slander carried, that, not unfrequently, a certain degree of timidity is manifested. Now, this is going too far in order to stifle calumnious reports of enemies. We conceive that we should always pursue the even tenor of our way regardless of what evil-disposed persons may say. We should live above the fear of cool, calculating, lurking hatred. Or, as the bard of Avon has it:

——"We must not stint
Our necessary actions in the fear
To 'scape malicious censures."

It is no disgrace to a man, a society, a state, or a church, to have enemies. Indeed, we view it in the contrary light,—for the good, the great, the noble and the honorable always have met, and, beyond doubt, will continue to meet with opposition—aye, with more than opposition,—bitter hatred, relentless enmity, base and slanderous accusations, and wholesale injurious fabrications. But this is only indicative of the evilness and loathsomeness of your enemies' hearts—it cannot hurt the good, the true and the faithful. For a time, perhaps, your honor may be dimmed, but sure as the Great Searcher of Hearts lives and reigns you will ultimately shine in all the splendor and purity of your real character. Man himself only can assassinate his own reputation.

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE.

Nothing is so easily done as to preach and talk of obligations which we are under to do justly and to walk humbly; but it is altogether a different matter to write, and preach, and talk simply by example. And yet, though the former be useful, how much more valuable and effective is the latter? What are those most beautiful essays on the cardinal virtues, compared with the excellence of the life in which these virtues have a living and vital existence? It was not alone the doctrines, advanced with such dignified and persuasive eloquence, by our Saviour, nor the wonderful miracles performed by him, which made the hearts of men follow after him; these were rendered doubly effective by the example which he set at all times, even under the most trying circumstances.

And so it is now, in an humble sense, by mere human hopes. Men may preach and the world will listen, but profit comes by example. A parent, for instance, inculcates gentleness to his children by many sound precepts, but they see him treat his beast in a rude and angry manner, and, in consequence, his instructions are worse than lost, for they are neither heeded nor respected. His example, as a gentle and humane man, would have been sufficient for his children without one word of command. Men are just like children in this respect, and imitate a good example, while mere words, no matter how good and true, without such example, will pass into one ear and out at the other.

PERSEVERANCE.—All the performances of human art at which we look with praise or wonder are in[illegible] stances of the resistless force of perseverance. [illegible] It is by this that the quarry becomes a pyrami[illegible] that distant countries are united with ca[illegible]als. If a man were to compare the single stroke [illegible] of a pick-axe, or of one impression with the sp[illegible]de, with the general design and last result, he w[illegible] would be overwhelmed by the sense of their d[illegible] proportion; yet those petty operations, incessa[illegible]ntly continued, in time surmount the greatest d[illegible]ficulties, and mountains are leveled and ocea[illegible] bounded by the slender force of human being[illegible]

MARRIAGE HYMN.

BY ALICE CARY.

The moon's white herd feed in up: another herd,
And yet another one will bring the noon
So wide in, through many vistas and shades, as shy'd,
The golden day she stands.

Take all the hands away, and let no noise
Be in the house, while softly I undress
My soul from burdens of all sorts, and wait for
My rest from love's exercise.

The sweetest sound would here be night—for dew drops
Sitting the grass eave in the eave and wheel,
Would make a descent in the heart, attuned to
The bridegroom's coming feet.

Love's blessed Lares! if we could hear our walk with
Your silver steps, and your tiny Mays,
Surely they would not shame as well as thee dost,
Lighting our dusty ways.

Without that, when a dim and awful story
But years would fix, oft, confidingly relate;
Site of the life eternal, brightly growing
In the low soil of time.

THE GAMBLER'S VICTIM.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

"So you would like to know how I first became acquainted with my bride?" said an old friend of mine, by the name of George Carson, whom I met on an Ireland tour. "Well, thereby hangs a tale; but as it proves a both romantic and tragic, and has a moral, you shall have it.

"Shortly after the 'gold fever' broke out in California," pursued my friend, "I was, as you know, among the first to venture into that then almost unknown region, with a view to amassing wealth, by what I at that time regarded as the very simple process of digging up gold by the bushel. I arrived out there, as you also know, with a select party of friends, and forthwith we set off for the mines. Having fixed upon a location, we all went to work in high spirits, and continued together about a month; by which time we had made the best very agreeable discovery that it all is not gold that glitters; and that, even in the gold regions, there is an immense amount of earth which has nothing in it to glitter.

"Up to this time named, though working industriously, we had not cleared the expenses of living —to say nothing of the expenses of our outward voyage—and consequently we had become a little querulous and argumentative. One said the gold was here, and another said it was there, and a third that it was nowhere—at least in a sufficient quantity to pay for the trouble of carting it away. Each was mess, without question, for we had actually seen some—but not in such chunks as we had graphed in our dreams—and this led to the very natural that if we had the mines at home, and could get our hand for a dollar a week, we might make a respectable living by digging and washing it, as we were by no means satisfied we could do the same in California.

"But then, if we could believe the stories of strangers, who occasionally passed us on their way, there were solid veins of solid gold in every place except where we were, and that in every vein some of us had an idea that he knew best how to find solid veins, we divided our party into pairs and set off 'prospecting' for fortunes for wonderful localities. My partner and I, not finding ours readily, soon began to think it a fruitless task, and at length he went one way, and I another. After searching for a day or two, however, I fortunately found upon a spot which turned out the golden ore to term 'good-value profit;' and I began and continued to work alone for a week—luckily shooting game enough in the vicinity to supply the most pressing wants of nature.

"My solitary camp was near of the pleasantest, however—agreeably of the greatest, though now doing well exceedingly, and flattering myself that I should soon be a gentleman of fortune, when I was met with the same regret that Robinson Crusoe discovered the 'tracks in the sand,' that I one day found myself joined by a party of strangers, who definite-looking stranger, with black hair and eyes, and pale, classical, intellectual countenance.

"Henry Gordon—for such was his name—was a native of New England, who had received what is get rich—simply, as he expressed it, that he might put himself on an equality with a young and beautiful heiress, whose accomplishments were fervently adored by their only daughter throwing herself away upon one in such humble circumstances. He was about four-and-twenty years of age, had received a good education, and was certainly a gentleman and refinement; and the more I saw of him, the better I liked him, and the more I reflected upon the pure-pride of motive, which induced him not regard one man, while in the image of his father, as good as another, simply because he had not the same amount of the world's dross, or the politics that we were as industrious partners.

"Henry Gordon and I continued together for several weeks—one or the other of us going to town to obtain the necessary articles of food, and after the game had become so scarce as to require too much of our time in procuring it; and during this period I became greatly attached to him, and he equally reciprocated with all his energy.

"'Shall I ever become rich and get back to my native land?' he would frequently say, in a despairing mood; 'shall I ever behold my fair dear Agnes as her equal in wealth? and shall I feel her fate to the lonely mothers?' I always responded to he must—she promised to wait for me—and years for me; if money. I believe my partner was also attached and none of the selfish feelings of her pursuit; but oh! it is so long to wait!' And I am so unhappy here! on miserable! I will go home and return to one of my delicate organization; and I sometimes think I shall find it a very grave in California, and breathe my last breath among strangers, afar from her for whose sake I might live!'

"I encouraged him as well as I could, and bade him not despair. I told him we were doing well where we were; and though it might take a long time to get rich by digging gold, yet I thought that a sufficient quantity might soon be realized, to enable him to start in some kind of business, by which he could make money faster, and enter, ere-more encased in the feelings of love, and as would unlikely be acquired by some, I saw no reason why he and I might not be among the fortunate few.

"The next week of the mines, however, and repower to the weather—to heats, and damps, and sudden changes, and the irregular fare of the mountains—did not agree with him. Henceforth sickly when he could, he grew paler and more sickly every day; and at last felt quite ill, and was obliged to suspend his labors. I attended him as well as I could; and he recovered so as to be able to leave the mines, but not to resume his occupation there.

"All this time he was much mentally depressed, and continually talked of his Agnes, but in a tone of deeper despondency than ever, and sometimes praying that he might live to return, if only to see her again ere bidding adieu to earth.

"'If I cannot acquire wealth,' he would say—'if I cannot win her—if we cannot unitedly pass through the vale of life together—then the next happiness I pray for, is, that I may die in her active close, and be buried where she may sometimes look upon my solitary grave!'

"At last, after thinking me, with tearful eyes, for all the kindness I had shown to him, he bade me farewell; and taking with him his hardly-earned gold, he set off for San Francisco.

"Months passed on, and I continued among the mountains, changing my locality from time to time, and on the whole meeting with very fair success, till the rainy season set in; when, fancying myself that, with the money I now had, I could do better at home more congenial pursuit, I set off for San Francisco also.

"Shortly after my arrival there, as I was passing down the principal street, which then consisted of tents and booths, a familiar voice hailed me; and, as I turned around, Henry Gordon bounded up and grasped me by the hand.

"'My dear fellow,' he said, 'I am so delighted to see you! for I had begun to fear that you had also perished among the mines. But you are looking remarkably well, and have, no doubt, been prosperous according to your deserts!'

"I rejoiced that I had no reason to complain, and that he gave me credit for the same; and he congratulate him in return upon his healthy appearance.

"'I'm,' he rejoined, 'I am better than ever, in every way—especially, physically, and pecuniarily. I have got my health, my energies, and my hopes, and am now on the fair road to fortune and happiness!' And he came down with the same manly had, set quickly to work in a small way, buying and selling, and, being honest, he soon might make more worth my thousands. Do you see that large shanty yonder?' pointing down the street. 'Well, that and all it contains is mine. Come, my friend, you shall make your home with me; and if you wish to go into business, I will put you in the way to make a fortune.'

"'And what of Agnes?' said I, as I accompanied him to his new business house, where I found a couple of clerks busy in disposing of goods at rate which I hustled might make any man wealthy in a very short time.

"'Ah, the dears of her!' he said, with sparkling eyes; 'better news than I had hoped; for I have received a letter from her, in reply to mine, in which she states that her father has been unfortunate in speculations, and is now reduced to want. Carson, this is glorious news to me! and it will be the proudest and happiest day of my life, when I shall come down upon my self-made rival's lake her hand, and assure her successful purwhich I hustled might make any man wealthy in suit has proved literally to the chance of life and death.

"Spell-bound by his singular appearance, I stood, for a few minutes, gazing sadly upon his silver locks, and wondering what could have so early in life had become his hairs. At length, just as I was about to push forward to him, if possible to drag him away from his doom, he staggered back, and pressed his convulsively-working fingers to his brow. At the same time, his whole person gathered upon his agonized features. The next moment I heard a wild shriek, as of a maniac, whose mind was worn by demons. Do you see that large shanty yonder?' pointing down the street. 'Well, that and all it contains is mine. Come, my friend, you shall make your home with me; and if you wish to go into business, I will put you in the way to make a fortune.'

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"'My dear fellow,' said I, 'come with me.'

"'At first he did not recognize me, but threw me from him with violence, saying:

"'Begone, fiend, I am robbed already—what more would you have?'

"'Henry Gordon,' I, soothingly, 'do you not know your friend, George Carson?'

"He sought his fingers quickly across his eyes as if brushing away a mist, and replied, in a hollow, hoarse voice:

"'George Carson, is this you? I thought it was another—I took you for the fiend in human shape that now the power possesses to destroy me. Forgive me, my friend, my brother, if I have wronged you!' and he pressed, hurriedly, grasping my arm, and dragging me into a store. There he introduced me to a retired man—ruined for this world and the next! I have lost all—all—everything!—fortune—hope—happiness—my Agnes!'

"But you can easily retrieve all, Henry, if you will but bear up with a little more manly fortitude.'

"'Not so!' he somewhat wildly rejoined; 'it is all over with me. I am a ruined man, and to you are here. I wanted to see a friend, but never expected to again. Here—take this purse, and return to the States, seek out Agnes Walkham, and tell her it came from me, with my blessing!'

"'What means this strange language, Henry?' I said, in astonishment. 'Surely you will not think of leaving me?'

"'I have promised, Henry.—I have sworn. So come! but we leave this scene of vice.'

"'One moment!' he said; and turning quickly on his heel, he strode back to the table at which had again closed around the fare bank.

"Almost the next instant I was startled by the report of a pistol, followed by exclamations of horror; and when I reached the table, I found the unfortunate Gordon, just in time to see them raising poor Henry Gordon from the table, upon which he had fallen through the shock, with his own hand—literally the gambler's victim—sacrificed on the very altar of unholy desires!

"'I kept my promise,' concluded my friend, 'and gave the ring to Agnes Walkham, and another on her wedding day—for the first love of Henry Gordon is now the wife of him who rejoiced in his misfortune, and who, in the fatal vice, and bitterly mourned his untimely end.'

"PICKLE HAM."

There is, generally speaking, as much in a man's name as in a house—applicable to a woman, that it is always a daring task for her to weigh his worth by the mere sound of the word of caution to my poor sanguine friend, I took leave of him. As my story, however, relates more directly to the existence which shine out briefly and brightly in the dark expanse of humanity, like stars on the midnight firmament, does it seem that love and sympathy can raise the curtain, and let one soul perceive the other. For if woman knows not man, neither can he, except in rarest instances, regulate the spring of her facile, or discover the fountain of her virtues.

He that lends an easy and credulous ear to calumny, is either a man of very ill morals, or has no more sense and understanding than a child.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Ans.—All the back numbers of the Ledger, from June 7th, 1856, up to the present date, can be had at our office, in quantities or by the single copy.

Diana.—It is improper for young ladies to do anything contrary to their fathers' orders; but a girl may ask a gentleman to call on a phrenologist with her. It is not honorably intends to pay for such an advice. It is not customary or proper for a girl to take her lover's arm on first promenading in the streets, in the daytime, unless the gentleman offers it.

A School Girl.—We do not consider the first matter to which you refer of any serious consequence. As to the second, you should be influenced by the expressed wishes of your friends.

Mary Carolyn.—You would doubtless be gratified by the correct reading of the words you mention, but we must decline to gratify your curiosity in that respect.

Ignorance.—You can try a duplicate of the experiment once. You will probably throw away your money.

Linna.—If you are so fond of the life of dependence, you are welcome to see how you like it. We recommend, however, that you will probably find some more spirited employment more to your taste.

Inquirer.—Answering a question is a statement of the case, and not an application to the lady.

E. Bend.—Thanks.

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E. Bend.—Thanks.

Agnes Hervey says there is an architectural problem which has been puzzling herself and neighbors for a long time, and she would like to know if we can solve it. It is from a scientific work. The problem is this, namely: Two men were engaged to dig a well. One was to dig it as large, the other was to have it for his share. As the earth at one end of the ditch was harder than that at the other, the man who had the largest amount to excavate paid one fourth more a yard than his fellow laborer. On coming to settle with their employer, it was found the amount of each had earned was equal, and as each was paid twenty-five dollars. Question: Can we, how much did each receive a yard? and how many yards did each dig? Any smart boy can solve the problem in a few minutes. The first thing to dug the hard end of the ditch received fifty-six cents and the second of a cent, for if one yard cost fifty cents four yards cost four sixths of a yard. The other received fifty-six cents and the second of a cent, for if one yard cost fifty cents four yards cost four sixths of a yard. The other received forty-four cents, for if one yard cost fifty cents four yards cost four sixths of a yard.

Penn.—When a person whom you wish to treat with kindness and courtesy addresses you in a way that you wish to provoke him into a carriage, or in any other way, you should not be provoked to anger, but to the kindest and politest. This is one of the last points of exercise which men, even the most pugnacious, are willing to yield, and that the superior is to take the lead, and that you are to follow in his wake. We have known a gentleman speaking of them, and without attempting to control even with a single word, or look of reproof, and who, by his refusal to test the perfection of a man's good breeding, he would not be provoked to anger. Such a course, we think, on the stomach would quit, to his companion to enter a fray; the latter, in the absence of his opponent, would be left to the choice of either to follow his example in the more honorable good-breeding, would shrug back, and say, 'After you' and the affair would be settled in the best manner.

W. P.—You no doubt thought that you were raising the case, but you misunderstood it. We do not think it is. If you not know that it is impossible for a man who believes himself to be a Christian to commit suicide under any circumstances in most accordance with the strictest truth? A man may not, under the purest motive of life, do that which gives the worlds and state the visible facts of such a case; but he cannot commit suicide. The motive was prompted by moral and spiritual phases of the office, which would be incompatible with the Christian character. We do not think it is a crime to be a Christian, and make it a living and truthful exhibition of the character of Christ, and yet we